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ABSTRACT

These 12 essays examine trends and innovations at the community colleges of the State University of New York (SUNY). George Robertson details aspects of recruitment and mission planning at Mohawk Valley Community College for the 1980's. Judith Hall relates her experiences in integrating Latin American reading materials in an introductory literature course. Tanya Lowenstein and Paul Brennan describe a Fashion Coordination and Publicity course organized around the production of a fashion show. Jon Lambert discusses the potential role of foreign students in internationalizing the campus experience. John Flynn argues that the format and content of history courses must be modified for nontraditional students. Ramesh Gaonker suggests teaching strategies and a curriculum design for engineering technologies. Christine Godwin describes the development of an interdisciplinary reading-writing model for reinforcing composition skills in content area courses. Rona Ostrow explains the structure of a vertical file for fashion retailing literature. Marcia Kucera and Esther Sabol discuss a model word processing center for secretarial students. Jacqueline McCoy-Nicolette and Anne Marie Catalano describe Niagara County Community College's Career Information Day. Richard Meagher surveys the experiences of SUNY colleges with January minisemesters. Richard Katims urges instructors to rediscover the mysteries of learning. (JP)

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An annual collection of articles
on teaching and learning
by faculty of the
community colleges
of the State University of New York.

1980

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State University of New York

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1980

FOREWORD

It is with much pleasure that I welcome you to the 1980 edition of Insight, an annual collection of articles on teaching and learning at community colleges written by faculty and administrators of the State University of New York. Now in its fourth year, Insight has a well-earned place as a respected publication in SUNY and with community college educators across America. We are proud of the work done by our authors and grateful for their willingness to share their ideas.

As SUNY community colleges enter the 1980's, enrollment continues to increase significantly. If all the students were like those we served in the 1960's and early 1970's, this phenomenon would not mean much. But we recognize that our students have more diverse individual needs than ever before. There are more employed adults in need of specialized programming and flexible scheduling. There are more unemployed students requiring developmental studies and useable skills. There are more women students. More minority students. More handicapped students. We have always bragged that community colleges can be many things to many people. Now we have to prove it.

This change in our clientele dictates complimentary adjustments in our methods of instruction. The quality of programs must be constantly reinforced and the technical methods of instruction must be improved. The articles in this edition of Insight clearly indicate to me that our faculty recognizes these needs and is responding admirably.

As in the past, this edition would not have been possible without the support of the Faculty Council for Community Colleges, the statewide representative advisory organization for the faculty of the thirty community colleges of SUNY. The Council continues to promote Insight, provides the editorial board and financially supports production of the book. We sincerely appreciate these efforts by the Council.

On behalf of the Faculty Council and the SUNY Community College Office, I am hopeful that Insight, 1980 will serve as a valuable means of communication for all interested in creative ideas in community college education.

Cornelius V. Robbins
Associate Chancellor for
Community Colleges
State University of New York

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A COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOR THE 80's

by George H. Robertson, President
Mohawk Valley Community College

Community colleges in New York face a complex and unpredictable decade. Efforts to forecast our future, difficult at best, are compounded by the special traditions of New York State, in which the public community colleges are incorporated as integral parts of the two great public universities. The Board of Regents and the State Education Department express higher education policy in terms of a four-fold division into SUNY, CUNY, the independent sector, and the proprietary sector. Given this basic structure for the analysis of higher educational policy, it is inevitable that the community colleges have difficulty in expressing their special role as compared to other more traditional colleges, public or private. Appropriate policy statements for community colleges simply do not emerge from the discussions of the Regents. It is left to the community colleges themselves to define their own place within the higher education services of New York State.

That's by no means as desperate as it sounds, however. The final report of the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education, Three Thousand Futures, emphasizes the common sense fact that each of the three thousand colleges in America will have to plan for its own future, given its own peculiar circumstances and strengths. The Council's "disaggregative approach to enrollment" will probably be the key phrase for educational planning in the Eighties, in New York and elsewhere.

A little over two years ago, our college came to roughly the same conclusion: that we needed to examine the planning data and variables that bear most closely on our particular college, and make reasonable forecasts for our own purposes, using our own vision for the future. It seemed sensible and pragmatic to set aside really long-term considerations for the moment. Most great social developments will proceed independent of our actions, and we will accommodate to them if we can. Practically speaking, we need guidelines for immediate action, while using our "best guess" at the long-run future of society, to assure so far as we can that our short-term actions are in the right general direction.

What follows is an outline of some of the problems that M.V.C.C. faced in this highly speculative planning, and the steps that we decided upon to insure that our college would prosper rather than suffer through the 1980's. It may be of some interest to other colleges.

First, we looked to the economic and demographic forecasts for our own county. The county is the main base of service for each college. Our county, like many other upstate counties, suffers from serious and perhaps chronic unemployment, from high taxes and taxpayer revolt; we have a steady and aging population, and many of the most productive and well-educated younger people leave in search of employment.

Most important from the college point of view, there will be far fewer young people in our county's future. The number of high school graduates will drop 38% by 1990. The State Education Department predicts similar reductions across the State, with community college enrollments dropping by 34%. Reductions in other kinds of institutions will be less, according to the State Education Department forecasts as of 1979. The private institutions of the state will decline about 24%, and the State University generally about 10%.

It seems clear that the State Education Department expects that community colleges will bear the brunt of diminishing high school enrollments. The Regents and their advisors in the State Education Department may be mistaken in this, as I believe they are. But it is sobering to reflect that this is their estimate of our future.

How then should we respond to these pessimistic estimates and statistics? For a start, we needed statistics of our own, based on local circumstances and competitive factors, as well as our own estimate of the place of the community college in New York's future. Using the various labor, economic and demographic reports for our region, we prepared a market analysis for M.V.C.C., as the basis for an orderly recruitment effort in the Eighties. We concentrated first on the graduating classes in Oneida County high schools, and asked a number of questions.

First: Can we increase our share of students who intend to go to two-year colleges? The prospects here are not encouraging. M.V.C.C. already gets the lion's share of these. The competition from other two-year colleges in our immediate vicinity is intense, and often based on unique programs that we cannot duplicate.

Second: Can we increase our share of students who in the past have beed bound for four-year colleges? Some families, in times of inflation and increased travel costs, are finding it increasingly difficult to send their children away from home to attend college, and of course they are finding it especially difficult to pay the very high levels of tuition at the private institutions. We can expect to increase our share of these students, but how much we can tell only through experience.

Third: Can we increase the College-Entering Index in Oneida County? That is, can we increase the number of high school graudates who proceed to college? I found these statistics rather surprising. In Oneida County, an extraordinarily high number of high school graduates attend college. The College-Entering Index in the county is 59%, compared to approximately 56% in the state as a whole. If we are to increase this figure, we must improve on an already excellent performance, and that's never easy. We could, in addition, try to assist our local schools in efforts to reduce their dropout rate, but that, too, will be difficult, a long-term effort.

Can we increase our activity in training courses for industry, the needs of industry? Certainly we can. But really substantial results in their field require a high level of commitment from local industry. This commitment is not easily obtained when business is depressed. Moreover, the demand for such programs is probably reduced where full-scale technical and business night-school programs are available, as they have been through our college for over thirty years. Limited growth in special areas seems the most likely prospect, according to our experience so far.

As a separate possibility: Can we recruit more out-of-country students? It's possible. But every college in the state will have the same intention, and the pool will decrease by 34%. Not a promising prospect. Foreign students may add a few, but for most colleges are likely to be an interesting and colorful asset rather than main course bread and butter FTE's. Out-of-state students also seem to be outside the natural mission of the community college, except where a few exotic or unique programs may exist.

The Adult Education Market

In our market review we next considered various other possibilities related to adult students. Most adult students will be commuters, and therefore we again concentrated on statistics from our sponsoring county.

First: Can we increase the number of adult students? Possibly, but there are some limits, even though many colleges seem to count on adult education as their salvation. The number of people in the age group 25 to 45 years old -- our prime adult clientele -- will increase by 1990 for sure. But in Oneida County it will only increase by 18%, whereas the high school graduating classes will be reduced by 38%. Even more important, we may already be victims of our own success. Mohawk Valley Community College already has a most successful and intensive adult education program. We have already exploited this market intensively. We must therefore wonder whether we are close to the ceiling with present methods and approaches to adult programming, and with growing competition from other institutions.

Second: Can we attract new adult students? Can we attract women, the elderly, adults in career transition? The answer, of course, is that we can do all of these things. But we must beware of the assumption that these new clienteles will be easily reached, or that they can automatically provide enough students to make up the decline in the high school graduating classes.

There are other possibilities out on the horizon of adult education. The community colleges are the most obvious and probably the most competent educational institutions to tackle the fundamental problems of adult basic education, including adult illiteracy and some aspects of chronic unemployment - technological, structural, youth. However, this is a radical concept that will require changes in legislation and other matters that we do not control. It would seem unwise for us to count too much on the adult basic education market, at least in the early part of the decade.

So as we enter the competition for students, it seems clear that there is no great single solution, no one grand trick that can be mastered so that we will easily fill our classes. More likely we will win small contributions from each one of these areas. Our recruitment programs must be comprehensive. It will need a broad, unified effort, and hard work over a long time. It will also require us to adapt to new kinds of students. For most New York community colleges, however, the basic nature of the institutions will ensure their survival, even though the Regents' forecasts are unable to say so.

A Complex Mission: A Simple Strategy

The complexity of our recruitment or marketing problem arises out of the complexity of New York's system of higher education. In our state, the community colleges must serve the open door policy legislated by the Assembly and agreed to by our Boards of Trustees. And at the other extreme of preparation and selection, we must provide college opportunities comparable with some of the most selective, expensive and elite colleges and universities in the world. To provide this range of service, to maintain ourselves in this competition, each New York community college must be several colleges in one, kind of multi-college, even more so than in some other parts of the country.

We must be able to accommodate extremes. People come to us for many different reasons. We may see in one day a young woman from a wealthy family who attends M.V.C.C. because we can help her with a learning disability, a young man from a middle-class family who cannot afford four years of anthropology or engineering at the extremely high cost of private colleges, a housewife who wants a two-thirds program to fit in with her daily chores and help her to prepare for employment. We may see educationally and financially disadvantaged students who need strong support in counseling, advisement and remedial instruction. We regularly see many young and not so young men and women with good academic skills who come to us for the training they need to start their working life, and they want to start as soon as possible. And we hear constantly from businesses and professional groups who, for one reason and another, need service for their organization, ranging from use of facilities, to advice, to full-scale programs of instruction.

The mission of New York's community colleges is to serve all these diverse needs, for individuals and community organizations alike. The strategy that arises out of this mission can be expressed as a triple-stream programming effort to include:

1) Two-plus-two programs for those who want at least four years of college,

2) A technical or career institute stream for those who want less than four years of education,

3) A community service stream of rich diversity for programs not easily accommodated in the first two.

Each of these three streams must be governed by the two main themes that will dominate higher education in the Eighties. First of these is the Open Door, in which we receive all who present themselves for instruction. Second, the theme of Lifelong Learning, in which we make learning available in ways and forms and at times that suit people of all ages, throughout their lives.

We need some footnotes to this scheme of three program streams within two great educational themes. First, we must understand that lifelong learning is by no means simply night school, but true flexibility and availability of learning throughout life.

We must also reject in advance any suggestion of conflict between vocational and liberal education. This sterile and tired old debate has no place in our colleges. Our clear commitment is to the unity of vocational and general education needs, just as these concerns are united in the lives of all of us.

In regard to the Open Door, we must assert throughout the college that the quality of offerings and programs continues to be our prime concern, but that thenceforward it will be measured at the point of exit, and not at the point of entry. This implies close attention to remedial and developmental services.

Within the strategic scheme of three program streams and two great educational themes, we need to settle several urgent operational priorities.

The first priority for now is recruitment of students. Without students, we will not have the revenues to manage our affairs effectively. Regrettable, but inescapable.

The second priority is the retention of those students who enroll in the college. It is no longer acceptable that fewer than four of every ten freshmen graduate two years later. Note that this is the M.V.C.C. figure. The average across the state is worse.

The third priority is the development of the base of information for planning, particularly an orderly plan of staff development for the avoidance of retrenchment.

Success in meeting these three priorities will equate to success in meeting our mission, at least for present purposes. Recruitment equates to access and services. Retention equates to quality and competence in our instructional processes. Planning will equate to the judicious use of our resources so that we may manage change as an orderly process rather than periodic panic and crisis. All of these will permit us to exercise a proper concern for the welfare of those who work in our college.

The College in 1990

We must plan for the future, and we will need to build flexibility into our planning and decision-making processes so that we can handle unpredictable events. The basic strategy of three lines of program development within the grand themes of Open Door and Lifelong Learning is a statement of process. But what will the end result be? Many of us find it helpful to envisage some end result, some outcome. In general terms, we can be sure enough of the future. We are, after all, community colleges, members of the most exciting educational movement in America today. We know what successful community colleges look like, and we therefore know what our own colleges will look like if they continue to be successful. So long as I do not have to guarantee numbers, I can outline a vision of the SUNY Community College in 1990.

The college will have flexible curriculum and scheduling arrangements. Students will be able to register by telephone or mail, and will probably be able to register directly into the computer from home.

It will have strong and easily accessible developmental and counseling services, as befits the diverse student body of the college.

There will be many forms of instruction. Almost all students will have at least some of their instruction through television, telephone, newspaper or other sophisticated audio-visual and print media. Individual learning contracts will be commonplace. Many students will receive academic credit for experiential learning of various kinds, ranging from internships and volunteer placements to paid employment of various kinds, including arrangements similar to the cooperative program.

Most students will combine study with work. For a majority, work will be their dominant concern: they will be part-time students.

The college faculty will be a group of mature, experienced and highly qualified master teachers and counselors, who will have a much broader role in the management of educational processes than is common in the present day academic departments. Each master teacher or counselor will provide advice and supervision to a cadre of part-time staff, some of whom will undoubtedly be in a quasi volunteer service role, as for example in the Corps of Retired Executives, the Each-One-Teach-One Idea, and other manifestations of a learning-oriented leisured society.

Physically, the college will be a network based on the main campuses plus smaller centers in the outlying villages as well as off-campus locations in the city centers. Some of the network locations will deliver instruction sufficient to acquire degrees or certificates, while others simply provide counseling and advisement. A residential conference center will be available to adult and short-time students. Child care will be a routine service at most instructional centers.

The college will be involved closely with a network of other colleges in other states and possibly other countries. Some rural upstate community colleges may combine into multi-county, multi-campus districts, following the demonstrated effectiveness of decentralized networks, and the inability of some local sponsors to support separate colleges.

Community colleges will be closely integrated, through articulation arrangements, with the local BOCES and school systems; through contracts with business and industry, as well as with the state and county agencies that deal with economic development, employment welfare and other social services that can be enhanced and improved through an effective educational component.

Perhaps this all seems like a tall order, a mirage rather than a forecast. In a variation on the Sleeping Beauty story, the handsome prince is met at the palace by the Grand Vizier, a kind of Vice President for Administrative Services, who leads him to Sleeping Beauty's bedside. "There she is, my boy," says he. "If your kiss awakens her, then she and all the riches of the Kingdom will be yours." The prince knelt by Sleeping Beauty, took her hand in his, then rose in consternation to blurt out, "But this damsel is dead!" "Well," said the Grand Vizier smoothly, "I didn't say it was going to be easy."

Some presidents of traditional colleges today must know exactly how the prince felt. But we have a very different situation. The communiy college is a vital institution. Our communities need us, perhaps more than they know. We have a record of past accomplishment second to none. As you can see, I am not a pessimist. The community college is, for me, the most exciting part of the American educational scene. We face a dynamic future, with challenges that are made to be met, and will be met successfully.

For us, the Grand Vizier will have to deliver the goods -- all the riches of the Kingdom, and Sleeping Beauty, too.

A graduate of the University of Toronto, George H. Robertson has been president of Mohawk Valley Community College since 1974. Previously he was Dean of Faculty at Sir Sanford Fleming College in Canada. He holds the Masters degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Toronto, the Masters in adult education from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, and the Ph.D. in higher education from Florida State University.

TEACHING ENGLISH WITH A LATIN FLAVOR

by Judith I. Hall
Department of English
Monroe Community College

As I was walking from a class where I had explained the intricacies of the semicolon, a colleague hailed me with the news that she was writing a grant proposal. In the course of our conversation, she asked if she could submit my name as the reference person for Latin American literature. Thinking that grants are always applied for but never received, I agreed.

I received my come-uppance two years later when my friend, Professor Sumati Devadutt, announced that she had received a grant from the U.S. Office of Education to internationalize the curriculum at Monroe Community College, and that I was to become the campus "expert" in Latin American literature. The next few months were some of the most exciting in my fifteen years of college teaching.

My knowledge of Latin American literature consisted of a few scattered Neruda poems from my undergraduate days and the ability to sing "Jingle Bells" in Spanish, so the thought of actually teaching the literature of authors whose names I didn't know was both exhilarating and frightening, mostly frightening. I was to find out later that I was still one step ahead of my students, most of whom admitted not knowing where Latin America was, let alone that its inhabitants could be literate. This fact is not surprising considering that a recent Fulbright newsletter reports "over 90% of U.S. public school teachers have had no meaningful exposure to non-Western cultures even though those cultures include a majority of the world's population."

The grant involved a reduced teaching load of one course in the fall semester so that I could become familiar enough with the literature to introduce it in an English course in the spring. There can be no greater gift to a compulsive reader than to be given time to read and compensation for it besides. Armed with a bibliography provided by consultants hired with grant money, I began exploring the exciting vision of the world offered by people like Marquez, Cortazar and Paz. I immersed myself in the literature, and by the time the fall semester had passed, I could hardly wait for a room full of students to share my enthusiasm.

Courses in Latin American literature are not unique on college campuses, but the approach was. The course in which I integrated the Latin American material was English 105, "Introduction to Literature" which is a genre course that had traditionally used British and American examples. My plan was to introduce Latin American modules in addition to the British and American as we studied each genre. The bookstore and assorted publishers had other plans for me. As it turned out, I had no books whatsoever for seven weeks of the fifteen-week course. Teaching literature with no books was a challenge I hadn't bargained for. As a result, I taught the Latin American material in a cluster which I had wanted to avoid. I had hoped to make it seem less "foreign" by using Latin examples along the way.

My first step was a brief geography lesson complete with maps so that I was confident the students and I were beginning with the same idea of where Latin America is. Next, I felt that I had to offer some answers to the question the students were all asking mentally if not verbally, "Why should a community college student in Rochester, New York care about Latin American literature?" We talked about four possible answers to that question. (1) To understand a culture that will become increasingly important for us to understand. In 1971, the population of Latin America was 291,000,000; in twenty-five years it will exceed 600,000,000. The Hispanic population in the United States is our largest minority. In addition, our economic dependence on Latin

America is quite evident. The countries of Latin America comprise our third largest import market; in twenty years, it will be the largest. It is also painfully clear that we do not understand our neighbors or their culture now. James Reston wrote in the New York Times in February, 1979 just before President Carter's visit to Mexico: "It is significant that even President Carter's speech writers know so little about Mexico that they came here to talk to Octavio Paz before preparing the President's remarks to the Mexican Parliament."

(2) To understand Latin American thought. There are exciting visions and ideas in Latin American literature related to a rich heritage which, in a way, we share. Octavio Paz has said that "We are two distinct versions of western civilization." If we can't all learn the language, or we can't all visit the country, then studying the literature is the next best way to understand.

(3) To have some knowledge of a major influence in world literature. The United States is behind in its acceptance of translated material which usually comes to us by way of Europe where it first gains legitimacy. The innovations of Latin American writers are in the forefront of world literature.

(4) To enjoy the literature. Probably the best reason to study Latin American literature is that it is fun. This is not second-rate literature; there are stories and poems as good as those produced by any other culture in the world. The study of Latin American literature is another chance to increase the variety of choices open to us, another chance to make life richer. Indeed, why not study it?

After that brief introduction and discussion, I assigned some stories that I felt sure the students would enjoy. I have yet to meet a community college freshman who does not like Edgar Allen Poe. Therefore, the stories selected for the students' first taste of Latin American writing were Poe-like, macabre stories. One, "Major Arundel's Hand," concerns a man whose severed hand comes to have a life of its own. Antoerh, "The Thing in the Pillow," involves a young bride whose life is nightly being drained from her, literally by "The Thing in the Pillow" and symbolically by her husband. After these two stories, I introduced some others that had a particular Latin quality to them. After all, my aim was to help the students see what is unique about Latin American literature as well as what elements it shares with the more traditional forms they were used to.

With ten or twelve short stories and background, I felt my students were ready to attempt Gabriel Garcia Marquez's magnificent novel, One Hundred Years of Solitude. As one student said later, "That novel was a real trip for me." And so it was for all of us. Some balked at its size, but having spring vacation helped, and all but two students managed to complete it. Some of our best discussions stemmed from this novel, and when we talked about experiences that all of us shared by virtue of our humanity, one student remarked, "Those Columbians don't understand women anymore than I do."

The poetry selections were also chosen carefully. Because many students have a built-in resistance to poetry, I chose poets whom I felt were representative, but enjoyable to read. The three I concentrated on were Mistral, Neruda, and Para. By far the most popular was Nicanor Para, a physicist who writes what he calls "antipoetry."

Perhaps the best indication of the students' response to the Latin American material occurred near the end of the course. I asked them to choose readings for class discussion for the last week of classes. Two-thirds of the class voted to read more Latin American stories rather than to return to our British-American anthology. When asked to evaluate the entire course one student said, "I felt it was good experience to read the Latin American literature in English class, because otherwise I would never have read writings from other cultures." Another comment was: "Even though I found the literature strange, I liked it."

As for my own experience, the project helped me to grow personally and professionally in ways that otherwise would not have been possible. Some of my colleagues in the English Department have also caught the Latin fever, and the Marquez novel was taught in the novel course the following semester.

The experience has taught me that as

educators in the humanities, we have a special responsibility in helping students appreciate people in other cultures. Current events clearly demonstrate that as Americans we must make more effort to understand our non-Western brothers and sisters. Too much of our understanding of the third world, in particular, is derived from what we see on the nightly news. We have no shortage of information about Iran, Mexico and China from political and social scientists. But political discussion of the third world tends to emphasize differences, contrasts to western modes of thought. While literature does illustrate contrast, it also reminds us of experiences we hold in common. Birth and death, love and hate: these are events and emotions shared by virtue of our humanity. To have a more holistic understanding of a culture, we must go beyond the empirical evidence offered by the social sciences. Is it the emotional tug of the poet or the statistics of the sociologist that gives us greater empathy with our fellowman? Those of us in English, particularly, have unnecessarily narrowed our selection of the writers we choose to teach. By introducing some selections from third world writers perhaps we can help bring about that understanding which is currently lacking.

Judith I. Hall earned the B.A. from Ohio Wesleyan University and the M.A. from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In addition to freshman composition, she has also taught speech, children's literature, and American humor. She is pursuing her interests in third world literature with a trip to India this year, accompanied by her husband, Don, and nine year old daughter, Elizabeth.

AMERICAN TRENDSETTERS: HANDS-ON IN THE REAL WORLD OF FASHION

by Tanya M. Lowenstein
Assistant Professor
and
Paul W. Brennan
Assistant Dean of Instruction/Business
Nassau Community College

The goal of any two-year career-oriented education program is to prepare the student to assume job responsibilities immediately upon graduation. Traditionally, this goal is met through exposing the student to a combination of classroom theory and "real world" experiences. The "real world" or "hands-on" portion of a student's education normally comes through the cooperative work experience which is the capstone of many vocational programs. While the co-op experience is an invaluable part of a student's education, it does have limitations. American Trendsetters, a fashion show presenting innovative and avant garde collections from American designers, was developed to bridge the gap between the classroom and the workplace. Its intent is to combine the strengths of both approaches while compensating for some of the deficencies inherent in the co-op system.

American Trendsetters is built into a one-semester course entitled Fashion Coordination and Publicity. The course presents an all-encompassing view of the merchandising of fashion through coordination, advertising and publicity. The influence of the fashion office upon the wholesale and retail buying, selling and promotion of fashion is covered.

Students learn about the evolution of the fashion coordinator from the early twentieth century, when she was frequently a lady of society who reported the tastes and styles of the wealthy. Today, fashion coordinators in large companies are responsible not only for the ready-to-wear division of the store, but also for the hard goods areas such as furniture. Recently, a New York department store appointed a fashion coordinator Vice President of Operations. Her job is to oversee the image of the company and ensure that all areas carry merchandise for the same target market. Thus, the customer can clothe himself or herself, decorate his or her home and entertain guests while remaining ensconsed in the "life-style" projected by the store.

Students are prepared for this career, as well as for roles as fashion directors and buyers, through classroom projects which emphasize fashion projection -- the determining of the next season's styles based on current social and cultural events. Projects include fashion trend forecasts based on information culled from the fashion trade and consumer press. Press kits from the industry's Seventh Avenue companies provide a guide for the creation of press releases. Outside fashion events are viewed and later critiqued in class. All projects are used to educate the class about the intricacies of a fashion production. The best ideas to emerge from this classwork are often incorporated into the American Trendsetters' production.

The course is one part of an option in Fashion Buying and Merchandising offered through the Marketing/Retailing Department. The major prepares students for mid-management positions in the fashion industry and affords opportunities with resident buying offices, fashion publications, interior design firms, apparel and textile manufacturers, and other firms associated with the fashion industry.

The course has always been structured around the presentation of a fashion show. Several classes operating cooperatively were responsible for organizing themselves into a coordinated task force. The group selected models, choreographed the presentation and selected apparel and accessories from cooperating local retailers. It was in this last area, the selection of the actual fashion to be presented, that students received a less than realistic experience. In gathering fashions students were dependent upon the generosity and expertise of local retailers. In the real world, the job of fashion coordinator is to select designs from all available sources and coordinate them into a distinct and individual look for the store. In the typical college fashion show the producers deal with retailers as opposed to manufacturers, sales people instead of designers. In effect, selections are pre-screened. The students' show is dependent upon the tastes of retailers who may push items they think are most appropriate or saleable. The impact of the production is lost as the show "presents" items which are already on the retailers' racks open to public inspection.

By developing the concept of American Trendesetters as a showcase for the newest creations of the more innovative and daring designers, the students' learning experience was altered in significant ways. As an academic exercise Trendsetters leads the fashion major to consider new approaches to design. By putting together a show of experimental and futuristic fashions, the student can make no assumptions or rely on any proven standards. Like a person told to spell words without using any letters in the standard alphabet, the fashion student is forced to consider every shape, every combination of material, cut and purpose. Like the speller, the student cannot help but come up with new statements made with never-before-seen designs.

In the area of work experience, Trendsetters helps to compensate for a major failing inherent in cooperative field training. As previously stated, the course is offered as part of a career program aimed at placing a student in a middle management position. While field training may expose a student to the real world of industry, the nature of most cooperative work positions does not allow a student to realistically experience the middle management decision-making process. Understandably, even industry's most enthusiastic co-op sponsors cannot afford students the luxury of learning by their mistakes. Thus, unavoidably, the scope and depth of many co-op positions more closely resemble management training positions than true management positions.

In Trendsetters the realities of industry are replicated minus those co-op restraints of profit-making. Students make up the entire management team for the show's production. As executives, they are able to make their own decisions. They must also work with the consequences of those decisions.

The students organize themselves by applying, through a resume and interview process, for positions outlined by the classroom instructors.

The instructors act as upper echelon management, outlining the various positions available in the production and supervising the execution of the duties of each position.

After students have been provided with job descriptions, model try-outs are conducted. Students interested in modelling must submit a photo and resume as well as audition before a panel of faculty and professionals. Students are chosen for their ability to move well. The show is choreographed and requires more of a model than a straight runway appearance.

Once models have been selected, students apply for other positions. Applications are submitted with resumes to the instructors. Candidates are selected on the basis of previous academic record, experience, commitment to a career in the field and performance at a formal interview. Positions range from co-chairs of the production to committee member. Certain jobs demand that a student devote many hours of outside work to the production. Other, less responsible positions require only in-class participation. In a contract grading system, each job is assigned a letter grade for successful completion of the task. Failure to perform the assigned tasks for a particular position result in a failure for the fashion show segment of the course, which is 50% of the grade.

The positions and duties for the production are as follows:

Co-Chairs: Oversee all aspects of the production. Responsible for week-by-week progress reports from all committees. Answer only to instructors.

Fashion Coordinators: Responsible for contacting designers, selecting clothes at showrooms, coordinating overall fashion look of production, picking up and returning clothes.

Creative Consultant: Oversees all artistic aspects of production: press kit, house decorations, program, invitations. This is an advisory position.

Press Committee Co-Chairs: Responsible for press kit, photos and press releases; media contacts; programs and tickets; promotional T-shirts and posters.

House Committee Co-Chairmen: Must decorate runway, cocktail area and dining room. Responsible for collecting donations for favor bags, door prizes. Must arrange limousine service from train station for press and designers. Students who perform well on this committee are rewarded by being made student hostesses for the performances.

Technical Co-Chairs: Must arrange for music and lights for production. All sequences must be timed with a stop-watch and a minute-by-minute technical plan for the show must be programmed.

Dresser Co-Chairs: Responsible for model's room from supplies to assignment of a dresser for each model. Serve as liaisons with hair/makeup stylists. Must inventory, tag and obtain insurance for all clothes and accessories used in show. Responsible for keeping clothes in perfect condition throughout all performances.

Photo/Video Liaisons: Amateur photographers who document the production in slides and photographs. Also work with the professional runway photographer and school videotape producer.

Grades are assigned according to the difficulty of the task. Chairmen, fashion coordinators, models, and the creative consultant receive A's if they perform their tasks fully. Committee members receive B's or C's depending on how much responsibility they assume. Just as the president of a company, the instructors hire and fire based on performance of assignment.

The structure of the production's organization demands that students utilize general business practices: Responsibilities must be delegated, informal task forces formed and disbanded as unanticipated problems are encountered and overcome, individuals are held accountable for their actions. The role of the instructor is to foster an atmosphere of general cooperation, act as an information source and backup to compensate for the students' lack of experience and, when absolutely necessary, to help resolve conflicts which threaten the success of the production. This approach requires students to create and participate in a functioning business. Lessons are learned in organizational management and behavior which may be as important as those in fashion which students absorb during the course.

The student learns to make many managerial decisions concerning fashion including which fashions from a particular collection to promote and which to delete. He or she learns how to deal with the press and how to gain publicity through various media, both print and electronic. He or she learns the importance of detail work, from obtaining insurance for the $40,000 worth of clothes used in the show to the correct and grammatical wording of a letter soliciting clothes. The experience yields first-hand knowledge of the wholesale fashion market and other industries far removed from the student's daily routine.

One of the most valuable aspects of Trendsetters is the impact it has on career development. Fashion as presented in a retail store is an end product. The industry extends from the retail outlet back over a variety of routes through wholesalers, jobbers, agents, manufacturers, designers, mills and on. All of these areas offer job opportunities. An important part of the Fashion Buying and Merchandising program is to induce students to look beyond the retail front of the industry for careers.

American Trendsetters not only pushes the student out of the classroom, it drives him or her into the very heart of the industry. Students not only visit the garment markets of Seventh Avenue in New York City, but they must scour the design workshops and boutiques of Soho and Chelsea to seek the future direction of fashion. In this process, new facets of the industry are discovered and contacts with working professionals are made. It is hoped that this experience will lead to a more fruitful job search by the student following graduation.

One unanticipated result of the Trendsetter approach was the effect it had on many of the participating students' attitudes toward the project. The nature of the show, the presentation of the newest designs of the newest designers, altered the usual relationship between the students and the fashion suppliers. Traditionally, the local retailers acted as benefactors allowing their garments to be modeled in the interest of community good will. This creates a very one-sided relationship. Because so many of the contributors to American Trendsetters are new or undiscovered talent, they view the show more as an opportunity for exposure as opposed to a public relations chore. Several of the designers when asked to contribute garments took an active role in the show, suggesting complimentary settings, hairstyles and accessories. The interchange between students and designers often inspired the students to reach new levels of creativity and professionalism.

Recently even design talent has been found within the school itself though no formal fashion design program currently exists. Trendsetters has showcased the talents of Nassau Community College student designers in the past and will continue to showcase new talent along with such designers as Norma Kamali, Monika Tilley, Willi Smith and Betsey Johnson.

Aside from benefiting the students, American Trendsetters helps to strengthen the entire Fashion program in two major ways. Contacts made with the industry not only lead to jobs for graduates, but they also help to open important co-op positions for future students. During the most recent production the designs of OMO/Norma Kamali were featured. The firm was impressed by the professional demeanor of the students during the production and later contacted the school to obtain a co-op student. This student received a very positive review and was hired as a full-time production assistant.

Because it does present unique designs, many of which have not been seen before, the show attracts public attention. While the most publicity the traditional fashion show can hope to gain is a brief mention in a papers society or "living" section, Trendsetters was the subject of a five-page, full-color, cover story in Newsday's Sunday Magazine. This and other coverage, of course, enhances the reputation of the program.

The American Trendsetters' approach is not without its problems. Perhaps the greatest problem is that past success brings pressure to bear on each subsequent show. As a focal point of the academic and social calendar of the department and college, American Trendsetters plays to a sellout crowd of faculty, students, administrators and parents. It is often difficult to make the students understand that they, and not the instructors, are totally responsible for the project.

As a group, students face significant obstacles in completing the assignment. Not having experience, students are often unable to anticipate the kind of problems which might arise during the production. While they may understand the need for primary contingency plans, they do not realize that they need contingency plans for the contingency plans.

Student leaders have to grope through the problem of how to direct friends and enemies. Egos may be badly bruised as the workers try to reconcile a variety of levels of taste and styles with the sophistication of the clothes that are to be shown. Diplomatic skills can be stretched to the breaking point.

The project also presents significant pedagogical problems. Classroom instructors can never be sure that those students assigned key positions will be able to handle them. As the course is "hands on", academic achievements may not be an indicator of success. The fact that some students may be interested in the prestige of certain positions but not the responsibility demands that instructors attempt to keep track of effort and accomplishment. How to double-check on progress without destroying a student's confidence remains the greatest instructional problem.

With the exception of the tremendous constraints a semester's short span of time places upon the work, the problems American Trendsetters encounter are very similar to conditions in the real world of fashion. This microcosmic environment of Trendsetters with all the attendant problems of fashion organization and behavior is, of course, the desired state. It is within this controlled chaos that the best learning and best teaching take place.

This type of approach can also be taken for many career-oriented, community college degree programs. As with any project, the early work is the msot difficult. The objective appears to be to create a foundation which is solid enough to support the students' own creations, but not so complete that it confines those creative instincts.

Tanya M. Lowenstein received her B.S. from Indiana University. Professor Lowenstein and Professor Angela Bruno of Nassau developed many of the theories and practices recorded in the article with the assistance of the Marketing/Retailing faculty.

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IN-HOUSE EXPERTS — INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

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Contemporary youth enter the collegiate experience with considerable international sophistication. The multitude of factors helping to create this phenomenon (multilateral commerce, advancements in technology utilized in communication and travel, international nuclear-warfare capabilities, petrodollars....) have been discussed and analyzed repeatedly during the past two decades. As awareness of the increasing interdependence of the global agenda and one's local agenda increases it becomes imperative to actively foster the development of international/intercultural dimensions within the curricula offerings of America's secondary and collegiate institutions.

For the past quarter century most colleges and universities have responded to this need through the development of overseas study programs. Those of us lucky enough to be instrumental in the creation and maintenance of these international education opportunities drew (and continue to draw) deep satisfaction from this professional involvement in an educational mechanism through which America's higher education sector could give practical application to the rhetoric of "global citizenship" and "passengers on this 'spaceship earth'." Indeed, the students returning to "internationalism," through an overt increase in sophistication, tolerance, and self-esteem (although this much talked about change does need researched, statistical corroboration -- nevertheless, those of us involved in this area are convinced of the personal growth.)

Yet this was, and is not enough. Despite the success of study abroad programs (regarding the objective of increased, individual, interpersonal awareness) only a minute percentage of the college and university population was affected. The nuances of global interdependence of this period of human history demand that the intercultural dimension be integrated into the experience of every collegian. Impossible? Not really. There exists, on our campuses, a resource so obvious that it has often been overlooked.

The less developed nations of our world, as they move towards the achievement of social and economic independence, have increasingly adopted the strategy of utilizing the higher sophistication of their more technologically developed countries. To insure the continuation of skill levels within the indigenous population these nations have devised a variety of schemes through which college-age students are assisted in travelling to the more developed nations and enrolling in degree programs within the higher education sector of that country. These international students can be found in colleges and universities throughout the United States (the Institute for International Education's census (1976) showed approximately 219,000 foreign students in this country -- and numbers have increased in the past two years) and manifest not only a serious approach to learning (which makes them a joy to those teachers with whom they come in contact) but also a pride in their national origin and culture. What a tremendous, in-house resource to be utilized in the development of curricula and extracurricula enrichment strategies directed towards the "internationalization" of the college experience!

But is this need for an intercultural/international focus really necessary? Don't Americans keep up with international events through the media? No! Stephen K. Bailey has pointed out that

> it is sobering to be reminded that the average current newspaper coverage (in the United States) of international events equals no more than one-half of a column of newsprint a day.
>
> (Bailey, 1978)

Most Americans are ignorant about the

impact of the rest of the world on our lives. The global oil problems are helping raise consciousness, but not enough. To remain an active, respected participant in tomorrow's world we must have a populace who are cognizant of "global" issues and problems.

Although comparatively little has been developed, several concrete plans have been implemented in an attempt to address this problem. The U. S. Office of Education has authorized a plan to develop program continuity in global and intercultural education (Juncker and Larson, 1976), and several U. S. private and public institutions have implemented the International Baccalaureate curriculum which standardizes pre-University studies throughout the world. Yet these represent only the start of what must be a national imperative within education. And so I return to our untapped resource, the international student.

As a citizen of a country less technologically developed than ours, the international student has an understanding of the concept of global interdependence. The student's active participation in an overseas study program (he or she is a long way from home!) has focused awareness on the interpersonal aspects of international travel. Attempts to cope with new behavioral expectations, food, social customs has heightened the student's sensitivity to other people, and his or her self-concept has passed through a traumatic process of self-evaluation through stress. In summary, the international student has been forced to grapple with all of the areas addressed by this paper. His or her successful academic experience speaks to the fact that the student has (more or less) satisfactorily achieved competence in dealing with those stressful areas.

America's colleges and universities, when they accept an international student, have an obligation to assist that person through the intercultural transition. This obligation presents the first opportunity to move towards curricula enrichment. The international student is often disoriented and anxious due to the "strangeness" of our multifaceted culture. The coupling of this student with one or more American students would provide (1) a peer counseling component to help ease him or her through the initial, traumatic period of entry and settlement, and (2) allow the Americans to grow to learn (and hopefully understand) more about someone from another culture. These students could be identified from social psychology, anthropology, sociology, and/or human services courses and could participate in a structure field experience, complete with seminars, as part of their academic credit-bearing program. Hopefully, these students would introduce the international student to friends and family, thus presenting this "intercultural" dimension to an ever-widening circle (both in the collegiate and community populations).

A second element of the enrichment program develops out of this "buddy" program. The seminars, originally held to assist the American students integrate their "service learning" experiences with pedagogical theories, could be expanded into a series of cultural seminars. This has several possibilities, two of which shall be presented. First, the seminars can be scheduled with both the American and international students participating. The focus would be on adjustment problems faced by the international student, but the identified areas of misunderstanding, uncertainty, and concern would be expanded into discussions of cultural differences. These seminars would be opened to all interested persons within the college community (as well as community members if desired) and would serve as an introduction to subsequent programs focusing on international and/or intercultural items. The second possibility is this culture-oriented seminar.

International students manifest a pride in their cultural heritage and welcome an opportunity to share their knowledge and perceptions with other, interested persons. With a small amount of encouragement and organizational assistance, the students would be enthusiastic participants in the development of a culture-orientation-information seminar focusing on their home country. These seminars would be presented by the students utilizing the expertise of college personnel in the development of the presentation (speech and English instructors, media specialists, anthropology instructors, etc.). The students would be given technical assistance and encouraged to obtain artifacts, data, visual aid materials, and the like from the nearest embassy or consulate. These seminars could: (1) be presented to the college community, (2) be offered as a resource to area high school language, social science, or other faculty, (3) be available to community groups. If the college had videotape facilities, the seminars could be saved as a permanent curriculum enrichment resource, and made available to other institutions or interested groups. It is logical that these ct as an invitation to many individuals and groups (Black community groups, Hispanic groups, service organizations) whose expertise, talents, and willingness to become involved will enhance the quality and dimension of the college's services to the enrolled international students.

American education is founded in the mutuality of teacher and student. Our professional rhetoric decries one-way communication and discusses the interactiveness of the classroom where teacher and student learn from each other. With the future rapidly becoming the present, we must accept the responsibility of creating an internationally-aware citizenry. Let us cease simply "giving" education to those students from abroad who join our institutions, and create processes through which we actively seek to learn "from" them. If, indeed, we must strive to develop a greater understanding of global interdependence and a positive awareness of other nationalities as being as "human" as ourselves, we should use the available expertise of all the world's citizens to help us become citizens of the world.

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RAISING THE ALARM HISTORICAL: REQUIRING HISTORY OF UNDERGRADUATES

by John F. M. Flynn
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Each generation has the responsibility to transmit the past to the next and, while we have been busy rewriting history by approaching the same data with different questions, the challenge for historians and history teachers in the 1980's is even greater. We are being called upon to justify anew the very existence of history as a viable field of study.

"The past is prologue," once meant that one must know all that went before so as to better understand the present and build the future. Today, however, there is a different reading of the phrase: to the NOW generation, "the past is prologue" means that it is basically irrelevant, perhaps good for nostalgic reverie, but not essential to functioning in a modern technological age. Educators know the worth of history, its intrinsic value as well as its importance in everyday life, but unless we address the real fact that most students today do not share that perception, historians are in danger of being relegated to speaking only to one another in the foreseeable future. Our mission today is to find a way to rally the masses to the colors, lest the world after our generation be forced to function without a knowledge of the past and, worse, without even a sense of history.

There is a perceived gap between the way history is taught and the needs and tastes of the students of today. These students are as much in need of history and can be as broadened by the study of history as their forefathers (or foremothers) but, unfortunately, in the work-a-day world, few students feel a need to study history. For some it is a diversion or a luxury, easily dispensed with; for others, a burden gladly avoided.

We are faced with "new" students, with "new" practices. Gone are the days of the homogeneous freshman class, of similar economic and social, even ethnic, religious, and sexual backgrounds, with high board scores and respectable writing skills. No longer are they almost universally dormitory-housed, recent high school graduates without part-time jobs and with an eye on gaining a liberalizing education, who, if they thought of careers after graduation at all, were content in the assumption that a college degree in any discipline was a key to a better start and a more rapid advance in any chosen field. This student description has not been generally true since the mid '60's, yet many historians continue to act as if it were. What we have already seen in the community colleges is the democratization of higher education, the real opportunity for anyone seeking to improve intellectual skills to find a place in a college classroom, and we hail this development; but we also have to recognize that the change in students calls for an examination of approach, course content, indeed, the students' reasons for studying history in the first place.

The new student is older, often more worldly wise, having developed either the necessary tools for succeeding in the world, or a more elaborate set of excuses and defences to explain why success eludes him/her.

The new students are closer to the economic realities of life. Working part-time to pay for an education, they are not only unable to devote endless hours to the gradual finding of self and development of skills by trial and error, but are also career-oriented and use the simplistic yardstick of "how will this course help me get a job" to determine what to study in college. The new student is a consumer seeking value for money.

The new students are also a product of the age of instant gratification--(perhaps it is not advisable to have the long view in a nuclear age?) We live in the period of the Polaroid camera, of instant-on TV sets, of plastic cups and plastic furniture. Students are at once more superficially sophisticated, given the media bombardment they have received since birth, and more impatient with building the skills that help make them independent of the media, enabling them to use it rather than be used by it. The environment has caused these individuals to seek to streamline their efforts generally and, in education, this means dispensing with any baggage-like history-when is not directly related to short-term success. Enrollment in history courses is a victim of such thinking.

Lastly, the new student includes those who come via open enrollment--the late bloomer, the poorly motivated, or those in need of special attention. Like the others, these will benefit greatly from taking history--but they cannot be dropped into the middle of a traditional course and called upon to sink or swim.

We cannot ignore the special differences between the new students and the traditional student, and among the new students themselves. We must strive to restore among them a demand for a grounding in the past. At the same time we must remind our colleagues in sister disciplines as to the central importance of history. This involves, I suspect, three things:

First, a realization that history is as much process as it is content. Before history was a noun, it was, for the Greeks, a verb. It is a way of looking at problems, current, future and past. It is a collection of techniques as well as a collection of facts agreed upon. If basic history courses stressed method as well as factual content, our colleagues in the technologies could more readily support them.

Secondly, while there are few of us today who still teach only "kings and battles," this is still the popular image of history courses. We must undertake to reexamine the content of our courses, being careful to let the world know what we are about. Economic history, intellectual history, ethnic history, social history, women's history, are not fads or gimmicks; they are urgent warnings that the history we are comfortable with is not necessarily the whole picture.

Thirdly, growing out of the first two ideas: a renewed concentration on method and an honest attempt to include neglected areas of history, will make the three- or six-credit introductory history course totally unmanageable. To work within the constraints of time, we will need to develop new yardsticks of selectivity. Perhaps it is not history that is dead, but chronology! Can our collective intelligence rethink the teaching of history so as to preserve the sense of order and development which chronology and periodization have always given us, but without the traditional calendar itself? A mere shift to typical approaches is made almost impossible by the lack of background of the same new students, so our work is cut out for us.

Many two- and four-year colleges still require history of all undergraduates. We must make certain that these requirements are maintained. This will become more difficult as industry and business raise the expected entry-level skills and room for courses in these skills is made in the curriculum by removing history. No matter what the ultimate occupation of the student, both the basic orientation given in a history survey course and the life-skills developed in the systematic study of the past, will prove more valuable in the long-run than courses on the latest computer languages, machines, or technologies.

Many more colleges no longer have a history requirement at all. Recent reports from major foundations and the Harvard curriculum revision call for a restoration of some formal training in history. These studies correctly place history at the heart of a college education.

The irony is that, in a world which is changing as rapidly as ours, it is the "irrelevant" history course--which broadens horizons, gives a sense of continuity with the past, encourages critical analysis and interpretation from the study of facts--which is more valuable than the "relevant" course on the state-of-the-art in most fields. State-of-the-art information is, by definition, almost immediately obsolete, while the history course skills will always be fresh and necessary.

With this in mind I raise the alarm historical, so that as responsible educators, we can all work to guarantee that history, as a requirement, does not disappear. With few exceptions, we are all products of College and University educations in which history was required. Are we prepared to educate a generation without those same skills, without that same anchor in the past?

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TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGIES

by Ramesh Gaonker
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Introduction

Teaching and learning is a highly personalized process of communication and interaction between a teacher and individual student. Ideally, a teacher should be able to individualize this process, meeting the varied needs of each student encountered, but pragmatically a teacher is faced with a task of communicating with a group of students with diversified needs and assisting them to meet the standards of competence in a given field. The process is particularly challenging in the engineering technologies in a community college where the teaching environment has certain characteristics. The dynamic forces of ever changing technology coupled with a potential mismatch between student and teacher characteristics and misunderstanding of technology curricula among faculty outside technology disciplines generate this unique set of characteristics. A technology instructor needs to understand these forces to develop successful teaching strategies.

This paper is concerned with the examination of this teaching environment and the forces operating in it and their impact on the curriculum and course design. Instructional activities are described in the context of a teaching-learning model. Based on the analysis of the model and the teaching environment, a set of strategies are suggested. These suggestions are primarily influenced by my teaching experience in electrical technology, engineering experience in industry and discussions with my colleagues. The comments are applicable for technologies in general and electrical technology in particular.

Teaching Environment

The teaching environment of engineering technologies is primarily influenced by the changes in technology and industry needs and these changes and needs, in turn, shape the curriculum and courses. The quality of a program depends on how fast it is able to adapt to the changes. However, the quality of teaching is determined by an instructor's ability to understand student interest and characteristics and resolution of the conflict between these characteristics and instructor's training in engineering disciplines.

This section describes the changes in technology, their impact on job requirements, their influence on curriculum and the interaction between student and teacher characteristics.

Technological Changes. In the last thirty years, dramatic technological change has become a way of life in the electronics industry. Approximately every five years there is a quantum jump in technological processes which has resulted in drastic changes in job requirements of engineers, technologists and technicians. I do not believe any other field has been subjected to such frequent and revolutionary changes in the last three decades. Between entry into a program and a student's graduation, job requirements take a new turn.

These changes have serious impact on the curriculum and teaching. As the technology advances, industry demands higher levels of skills from the graduates, which creates pressure within the constraints of two-year programs. On the other hand, industry needs are diversified; and as needs change with technology, the program may better serve the industry by teaching generic principles of the disciplines. There is a constant struggle to strike a balance between the generality of science and basic technology courses and the specificity of higher level courses. In addition, technological changes accentuate the ill-effects of the traditional separation of career courses from the liberal arts courses. The technological changes demand a specialist type of a person. To appreciate the implications of technological changes for the society in general, however, a cultivated person is needed.

Sudden technological change has two other effects on the program: urgent pressure on an instructor to keep current in the field and the unavailability of appropriate instructional material. When changes occur in technology, most material is scattered in journal articles and application notes of the industry. It becomes imperative on the part of the instructor to train him/her self and prepare instructional material. More often than not, instructors teach without textbooks in higher level courses. There is no other field where an instructor needs to teach a course when he/she has just barely understood the recent changes in the field. The preparation required to teach such courses is far different from that of the courses where teachers brag of teaching the courses with their eyes closed.

Student and Teacher Characteristics. Student and teacher characteristics are determining factors in setting up the standards and meeting those standards of the field. There are stereotype images about the students who enter into technology programs. They are viewed as intellectually inferior to liberal arts students and less motivated in academic subjects. Socially, they are assumed to be crude in their values and ignorant about the world. My experiences suggest the contrary.

High school grades and standard achievement tests do not reflect their intellectual ability or curiosity. These students are highly focused on relevance of the subject to the real world and their career. If they do not see the relevance or a teacher fails to show the link between the subject matter and the real world, the student is likely to lose interest in the subject. Technology students tend to display poor performance in liberal arts courses because of the perceived nonrelevance of these courses to their careers. In addition, if faculty teaching liberal arts courses carry stereotype images about these students, they tend to have low expectations of these students and students perform even more poorly. However, if students see the relevance of the subject matter to their career goals, their academic performance can match any other group of students in other disciplines.

I find electrical technology students, especially sophomores, highly motivated in the field of electronics. I find them disinterested in abstract concepts and more in tune with the practical applications of these concepts to the real world. Students are interested in a product or a project but minimally concerned with the process. They appear to be strong on schematic relationships but rather weak on high level mathematical skills and verbal skills.

On the other hand, technology teachers, in general, come from engineering disciplines. Their academic background has been characterized by high level mathematical skills and an orientation towards abstraction and generalized processes. The teaching methods practiced in engineering schools are ineffective in teaching technology students. Technology teachers can not emulate their own teachers from engineering schools. They have to find their own strategies in presenting the material based on the understanding of the conflict between student interest and their academic orientation.

Strategies for Curriculum and Course Design

The relevance and real world applications is a key to plan successful strategies to maximize the learning of these students. This has several implications to the sequencing of courses and planning course contents.

Most electrical technology programs range from 64 to 72 credit hours; out of which 30-40 credits are electronics related courses and the rest are liberal arts courses including mathematics and physics. In the 50's and early 60's when most two-year colleges started, technology curricula were designed on the mistaken identity with the model of four-year engineering curricula. In engineering curricula, the early part of the program (first two years) is primarily devoted to general courses to provide basic foundations in mathematics and sciences, and the latter two years are concerned with engineering courses. On the basis of this model, in the first year, technology curricula concentrated primarily on the general courses (physics, mathematics and English) with most technology courses included in the second year. This had a devastating effect on student interest and achievement: more than 60% of the students who entered in the program would leave the program before graduation. Students failed to see the relevance of the general courses to the courses of their major interest. In the 70's faculty realized the consequences of their curriculum design based on the engineering model and began to introduce several technology courses early in the program. The dropout rate has been reduced dramatically.

The inclusion of technology courses early in the program, however, generates additional constraints on course designs. The technology courses have to be taught either without the benefit of mathematical tools or the respective content in technology courses and mathematics courses has to be well articulated. Similarly, students fail to see the relevance of such courses as English, social science and physical science to their career interest.

To make the curriculum relevant to the career objectives of students and to show the link between the course content and the real industry world, it is necessary to examine the courses in terms of their overall objectives and functions. For the convenience of classification, the courses can be categorized as:

- Basic Skills (introductory mathematics, written communication and graphics)
- Foundation Courses (introductory courses in technology)
- Advanced Courses (higher level courses in technology)
- Enrichment Courses (social science)

The various courses have very different objectives to accomplish, and the traditional format of three hours of lecture (plus laboratory for science and technology courses) is not the most effective approach to teach these courses. At times, the traditional approach tends to be counterproductive. I have suggested below various approaches which can be attempted to meet varied objectives of the different courses in technology programs.

Cluster Approach. This approach involves teaching two or three courses from different disciplines to the same group of students in a well coordinated fashion. For example, a mathematics, electronics and written communication course can be taught in such a way that the concepts in one can be reinforced in other courses. Technology students have serious difficulty in viewing the commonality among concepts taught in different disciplines. The concepts of solving a simultaneous algebraic equation in a mathematics course are equally applicable to solve electronic circuits. The logical structure taught in English composition is likewise applicable in organizing a project report.

There is a notion among non-technology educators that grouping students from various disciplines in basic skill courses (English, mathematics) is beneficial. In my opinion, such practices are meaningless for skill courses, though they may be beneficial for enrichment courses. The college algebra course taught without showing applications of these concepts is ineffective. And often, a technology instructor has to teach these concepts again in technical courses. The case is similar for English composition or written communication courses. The literature-based composition course for technology students is neither effective in culminating the appreciation of literature nor in developing technical writing skills. From students' points of view, a course in English is seen as an unwelcomed requirement at best.

The cluster approach of teaching two or three courses as a cluster has several advantages. First, students are able to view commonality of concepts across disciplines. Second, students are able to appreciate the relevance of non-technology courses to their career objectives. And third, the approach opens up the communication between faculty members from different disciplines and a faculty member is able to appreciate a discipline other than his/her own.

Competency-Based Approach. A competency-based approach where performance objectives and evaluative procedures are carefully specified is necessary for foundation courses in a major subject. The performance objectives provide structure and interrelationships between various concepts and courses and assist students in providing a direction. The conceptual hierarchy is able to assist in identifying strengths and weaknesses of the program. A properly written objective in an electronics course will be able to identify the necessary concepts from other disciplines, and hence, show the relevance of other disciplines to students' career goals. Furthermore, evaluative feedback in competency-based courses assesses the effectiveness of teaching strategies a teacher may use.

Project-Oriented Approach. A project-oriented approach where the whole course content and learning activities are designed around a project or several projects, the approach is very effective for advanced level courses. The project provides a highly focused structure for learning activities, shows the relationships between various concepts and provides a link between academic subject and the real world. Furthermore, the project activities expose students to compromises of the industrial practices as opposed to the academic designs on the paper.

Interdisciplinary Approach. This approach is primarily oriented towards problem solving and organized around the study of particular problems raised from the perspectives of a variety of disciplines. This approach is suggested for such enrichment courses as social sciences. The technology programs include six credits of social science. The primary objective of the courses is to provide appreciation for disciplines which deal with society at large and contemporary issues. At present, students take introductory social science courses in one or two disciplines. The courses neither provide strong foundation in one discipline nor cultivate broad sense for social issues. Technology students, heavily interested in technological subjects, should have broad view of implications of technological advances to society at large. This can be accomplished if social science courses for technology students are taught with a problem-solving orientation. This calls for interdisciplinary approach because social problems do not come in neat packages presumed by such disciplines as economics, psychology or sociology.

Teaching Strategies

Teaching strategies are of a personal nature and may vary with the group of students. The teaching strategies suggested below are a personal account based on my understanding of student characteristics, technological needs and curriculum needs (described above) and especially applicable to my own field---electronics. Some generalizations can be made, but it is left to the reader to draw the final conclusions.

I believe the best teaching is that which facilitates student learning toward standards of excellence in a given field and assists students to become free of a teacher. The factors that motivate and facilitate student learning are varied and complex. However, I find it convenient to examine the teaching-learning process by considering the various classroom-related activities as components of a system and use teaching strategies appropriate to student needs and characteristics. The classroom-related activities of engineering technology courses can be divided into the following categories:

1. Lecture and classroom interaction,
2. Homework assignments and evaluation and feedback on homework,
3. Laboratory assignments and evaluation of laboratory work,
4. Evaluations (tests) and feedback.

In systems or engineering these categories can be viewed as components of a feedback model. In psychological terms these activities can be examined in terms of stimulus-response feedback model; lecture and classroom interaction as stimuli, learning as response and evaulations as feedback. The suggested strategies in terms of each component are as follows.

Classroom Lecture. As stated earlier, technology students need to see the relevance of course content to their career; therefore, lecture content needs to be presented through first analyzing a specific example, building a general model, and again applying that model to a specific problem. This approach is opposite to the teaching of engineering where one begins with a generalized approach and goes to specific. The objectives and the requirements for each unit need to be specified in competency terms. Competency statements provide standards and clarify what is expected of students. Technology students, in general, prefer definite directives and are willing to work hard to meet those requirements.

Homework and its Evaluation. The most critical component of the learning model is the homework assignment and evaluation. In college circles, particularly in liberal arts tradition, homework assignments are regarded with suspicion and associated with high school or remedial work. In my experience, I find appropriate homework assignments and timely evaluation of these assignments is by far the most useful strategy in teaching technology students.

This strategy even assumes more importance in a situation where content is constantly modified with technological changes and the course is taught without any textbook. An appropriate homework is a nonthreatening evaluation of a student's own understanding of lecture concepts. Therefore, timely evaluation of these assignments needs to be provided. This strategy can be successfully implemented by providing incentives towards the final grade.

Laboratory Assignments. Laboratory work is a link between academic concepts and the real world of industry. Laboratory assignments cannot provide industrial experience; however, they should not be just academic exercises. Laboratory exercises should be complex enough to provide some insight into compromises and differences between academic concepts and reality and simple enough that students can complete them successfully within the constraints of an academic setting.

Weekly laboratory exercises should be written in such a way that they not only reinforce the lecture concepts, but give confidence to students in his/her understanding of the subject matter. They should be designed in such a way that students begin to be free of their dependence on teachers and take independent responsibilities.

Evaluation and Feedback. Students in general, being weak in written expression, should be given ample opportunities to prove their competencies through several tests, laboratory tests and final projects. Some students are not able to express their competence in written tests and need various types of evaluation. Furthermore, written tests are inadequate to evaluate conceptual understanding and competencies required in industry.

Summary. Based on my experience of teaching technology students, I believe the first component in the teaching-learning process, the well-organized lecture, is necessary but not sufficient for effective teaching. The most important component is the homework assignment and evaluation, however, most instructors focus their efforts on preparing classroom lectures and pay little attention to the homework component. Some instructors may assign homework but ignore its evaluation. As concerns the laboratory assignment, instructors should avoid the cook-book approach to laboratory assignments which creates a false sense of success and dependency on instructors. The primary objective of the teaching strategies is to provide direction and assist students to become free of the teacher so that he/she can undertake challenging responsibilities in an ever-changing technological world. This can be accomplished far more successfully by devising strategies which concentrate on homework and laboratory assignments, their evaluation and timely feedback to students.

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INTERDISCIPLINARY READING-WRITING: A MODEL THAT WORKS

by Christine M. Godwin
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Chairman, Interdisciplinary Reading-Writing Committee
Orange County Community College

Regardless of whether we're in or out of a "crisis" at the moment, community college students' reading and writing skills always need strengthening. How we, as teachers and institutions, do that is a continuing challenge.

When the current literacy crisis began several years ago, Orange County Community College was already developing what would become an Interdisciplinary Reading-Writing Program. In addition to lack of entry skills in our students, we also felt they were not applying what they learned in Freshman English to their content courses. So we began.

From its three-year evolution, we have discovered materials and approaches that may give other two-year schools a workable point of departure. These include:

- a precise definition of "interdisciplinary" in the reading-writing context
- a method of initiating a program
- a first-year structure
- an evolutionary model
- a series of lessons learned.

Each is summarized below; we use our own experiences as illustrations along the way.

Interdisciplinary: A Definition

For us, an Interdisciplinary Reading-Writing Program meant coordinated transfer-reinforcement methods to make students use Freshman English skills in content area courses.[1] So we would have to begin with the basic skills identified, taught, and practiced in the 101-102 sequence. Both English and content area teachers had to cooperate first. The former would immediately put a plug, called "transfer," into the other courses. The latter instructors would use a "reinforcement" cord to work back to Freshman English.

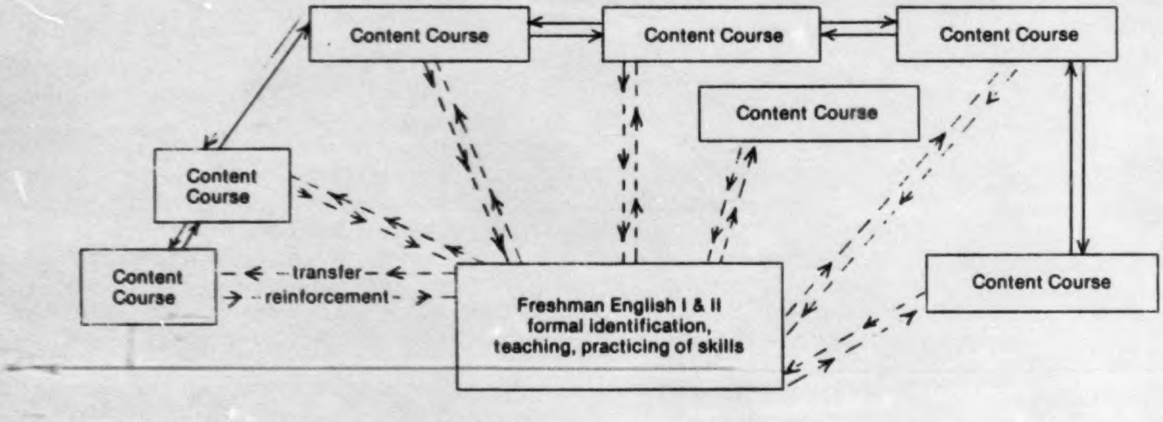
Content Course
Content Course
Content Course
Content Course
Content Course
Content Course
Content Course
Content Course
transfer
reinforcement
Freshman English I & II
formal identification,
teaching, practicing of skills

FIG 1. INTERDISCIPLINARY: THE THEORY

If, for instance, students are working on precise wording in Freshman English, the instructor can use examples to build a transfer to the physical sciences. He or she can use the differences between "speed" and "velocity." He or she will not teach that technical difference; that is the role of the trained physical scientist. But the instructor does show the student that a specific skill transfers here. The science instructor, when he or she teaches the technical difference, also notes that an English skill is applied here.

But the methods of transfer and reinforcement must be developed by all faculty working together. There are several values in this. First, as interdisciplinary groups, faculty increase their awareness of students' needs across the curriculum. Second, they can share techniques some already use. Third, the techniques they develop as a group give a uniformness to the reinforcement. That uniformness is essential to the transfer. Fourth, faculty can utilize English instructors' information on skills. Fifth, they can show the English instructor where certain skills are most needed.

The Beginning: A Survey

For OCCC, the best place to begin was with a picture of the entire faculty's perceptions. In May 1978 the English Department originally developed a survey because it wanted to evaluate the teaching of writing on campus. Faculty were asked about the students' needs, content course reading-writing demands, and suggestions for our composition courses.[2] In the last section, faculty repeatedly suggested some kind of teamwork with the English faculty to "reinforce the work of the English Department," "to see what other departments' writing needs" were, and to establish standards and goals. Delighted at this strong response, the Department decided to try an Interdisciplinary experiment. It appointed a coordinating committee.

The First Year: A Workshop Structure

If faculty, English and content area, were to become involved, they should make the structural decisions together. Therefore, Interdisciplinary committee members took the survey results and a definition of Interdisciplinary to division meetings, during the fall of 1979. When faculty again urged we try such an experiment, we turned to what became a three-stage, totally voluntary workshop structure.

Stage 1. A planning workshop was scheduled immediately. More than forty faculty from all academic divisions came. They decided to identify the most pressing skills needs and have a separate workshop for each. The skills chosen were basic writing skills, organizing-outlining-reasoning, and reading comprehension. They decided further to have an English teacher coordinate each and to meet as often as possible.

Stage 2. The three workshops began their work the following week. Faculty in each chose a three-part sequence: (1) gathering specific examples of skills problems in each academic division, (2) creating teaching strategies for each, and (3) writing sample applications of the strategies for different content areas. They also wanted to print these materials in an Interdisciplinary Reading-Writing Handbook by May. Materials multiplied like proverbial rabbits; so did ideas. But each workshop soon knew the project would take longer than one year. So they decided to take samples of their work back to the faculty.

Stage 3. With the Academic Dean, the three workshop groups created a morning-long, end-of-year general faculty workshop. Using a packet of materials containing one strategy and application from each group, they divided faculty into smaller, interdivisional groups, discussed the strategies and did sample exercises. These included applying the Frye readability scale to an excerpt from a campus sociology text, learning to conduct a student-run review class before an exam (a Business instructor's idea), and applying a brief writing evaluation chart (from a social science instructor) to a sample paragraph (from a business management class.)

The morning and the year were lively. But was Interdisciplinary over? Did it have the crucial faculty support and involvement to continue? Where and how should we proceed? We again turned to a survey. This time we asked faculty to rate the year's work, to decide if it should continue (96.8% said, "yes!"), and to suggest more specific activities. The faculty said: continue working, use workshops, explore research skills, essay exams, and student self-concept...and write that handbook!

The Next Year: Evolution

Objects in motion tend to stay in motion; living organisms grow and change. Both were true of Interdisciplinary. During the past year, we learned to be more specific; hence, the workshop titles. We learned to vary coorindators; a psychology professor chaired the self-concept workshop. The workshop members got to specifics more quickly; less time was spent sharing personal literacy agonies. The Research Project Workshop, for example, immediately defined the term, systematized its own research with a faculty memo soliciting sample research projects. They then classified these according to sources used and forms required. Next they interviewed contributing faculty about the students' performances for each and categorized the responses. Listing possible strategies, they now knew enough to pick the most promising and completely develop it. Soon they had an Interdisciplinary stylesheet for duplication and use.

Yet Interdisciplinary faculty also wanted to know "Why?" So the Self-Concept Workshop became indefatigable research, culling faculty perceptions and strategies as well as sources in professional literature.

By May 1980 the workshops had led to a rough draft of the handbook. But instead of a rush to uncertain execution, this sequence-suggestion was made to the general faculty:

1. test some of the Interdisciplinary materials (like the stylesheet) during summer school and return comments to the group.
2. print and bind the handbook over the summer.
3. at a general faculty workshop in the fall 1980, distribute and discuss the handbook.
4. implement its strategies (still on a totally voluntary basis) during the 1980-81 year.

Lessons Learned

As the second year passed, we watched patterns develop. The number of actual workshop members decreased, but the participants became more regular in attendance. The interdivisional representation held. More faculty than ever sent along materials. If they couldn't attend, they became a most efficient and broad clipping service. The Physical Science Division had a writing workshop as part of its end-of-year meetings. Out of it came a formal resolution of its commitment to reading-writing skills in its classes. The English Department created a special Interdisciplinary course, Applied Writing Workshop. It also developed an experimental rearrangement of research skills in Freshman English.

Only in the third year has the program really reached the classroom, though it has been introduced in bits and pieces previously. It took the two years to create our own unified approach. And if Interdisciplinary is really going to work on a campus, it must spring from that institution's particular needs; it must be created from that institution's resources, by its faculty.

Our students still have skills problems; they still must learn to transfer and reapply. We still talk a lot about all that, but we are also really trying to do something about it. It is worth every effort.

[1] Other schools shared their experiences and information with us. Either in personal correspondence or through conference presentations. We thank Beaver College, West Chester State College, City University of New York, LaGuardia Community College, and Empire State College.

[2] Two particularly good sources for campus surveys are: Behrnes, Laurence. "Writing, Reading, and the Rest of the Faculty: A Survey." The English Journal, 67 (September 1978), 54-60 and

Sherwood, Rhoda I. "A Survey of Undergraduate Reading and Writing Needs." College Composition and Communication, XXVIII (May 1977), 145-49.

As chairman of the Interdisciplinary Reading-Writing Committee for the past three years, Christine Godwin has reported here what is really the product of countless voluntary hours by 70 some instructors. Mrs. Godwin received her B.S. from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, her M.A. from the University of Pittsburgh, and has completed post-graduate studies in Technical Writing at RPI, in the writing process at IUP, and in American Literature at the SUNY College at New Paltz.

INNOVATION AND INFORMATION AT THE FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY LIBRARY

by Rona Ostrow
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Fashion Institute of Technology

Meeting the informational needs of a student body preparing for careers in the fashion industry and related fields is the particular and highly challenging province of the Fashion Institute of Technology Library. Unlike the traditional two-year college library where books and well-indexed periodicals generally fulfill the students' needs, the F. I. T. library functions more along the lines of a special library similar to those found in industry. The particular demands of the fashion buying and merchandising and related curricula dictate a nontraditional approach to information-gathering and have helped to shape the rather elaborate system of vertical files which has become the backbone of our collection.

The problem of providing the information required by such a specialized curriculum is threefold. The materials of the industry are not adequately indexed. These include trade journals and newspapers such as New England Fashion Retailer, Fashion Accessories Magazine and Shopping Center World. Secondly, the pace of the industry itself requires the utmost currency of information, a currency that the book-publishing industry cannot meet. Thus, while many of our students will be interested in researching the history and development of Bloomingdale's, Macy's or Neiman-Marcus, they are also responsible for knowing what these retailing giants are doing now. New branch stores being opened, new approaches to merchandising and sales promotion, the comparative standing of the leading department stores in terms of square footage and dollar volume -- all these are essential facts for our students. Currency again becomes crucial as new modes of retailing are introduced and popularized, such as Sears' recent decision to present its catalog to the cable television-viewing audience. Similarly, the latest fashion trends, the designer influence in the apparel industry, fiber and fabric innovation all demand the most current treatment available. There are no books to answer our students' questions about these and related topics of current interest. If and when such books are published, their import will be historical: our students will have moved on to something new.

Thirdly, our students at F. I. T. are relatively dependent on the resources of our library since it is the only place readily accessible to them where all the books, periodicals and media resources essential to their course work are brought together and organized for their use.

SOLUTION

Part of the solution to this demand for current marketing and/or fashion information is, of course, met merely by our extensive holdings of such specialized periodicals as Women's Wear Daily, Daily News Record and Retail Week, to name but a few. Yet, lack of indexing for all but the most general of these resources renders them virtually inaccessible. What we have done, therefore, at the F. I. T. library is to organize these materials in such a way as to make them most convenient for use by the students, faculty and industry we attempt to serve.

Our manner of organizing these materials has been to construct an elaborate system of vertical files similar to those found in many special libraries in industry. At F. I. T., these files are arranged alphabetically by topics closely paralleling the actual topics of course assignments. At the business/industry reference desk our vertical files attempt to deal with the areas of Marketing, Marketing Research, Apparel Manufacturing, Advertising and Communications, and the Textile Industry.

On a daily basis, the librarians assigned to the business/industry area review every newspaper, magazine and pamphlet received by the library in order to select relevant articles for the files. These are marked and headed by the librarians and later clipped or photocopied by the clerical staff. Each librarian has the opportunity to review all the selected materials to promote familiarity with the entire contents of the files as well as to suggest alternative or additional headings. The articles are then filed chronologically. New files are created as the need arises, usually for a "hot" new topic anticipated to be of interest to our students but also to meet the needs of a new course or assignment. Often when the number of articles in any one file becomes unwieldy, the file is divided into any number of more manageable sub-topics.

In the marketing files, therefore, the student will find information on apparel manufacturers (many of which are privately held and inaccessible through standard business directories), information on the marketing of various categories of apparel such as hosiery or active sportswear, individual cosmetics and toiletries manufacturers, home furnishings, fashion models and fashion shows, and sales promotion. An entire section of the vertical file is devoted to personnel management and management topics such as leadership, interviewing and training. Another section contains demographic and psychographic profiles of various areas of the United States for assignments involving the location of branch stores and opening small businesses. Yet another large section of the vertical file is devoted to the various aspects of store operations such as inventory, electronic data processing and store security.

Of particular interest is the extensive coverage given to individual retail stores. Many of the major retail stores throughout the United States have individual files containing every aspect of their business. Moreover, wherever possible, store catalogs, annual reports and special services illustrating store interiors and store display windows from supporting files.

Each subdivision of the vertical file corresponds to an area of the curriculum. For example, our students are regularly assigned the task of locating a branch of a New York City department store in a section of the country where one does not presently exist. They are responsible for identifying the type of customers to be found in the geographic area as well as the target customer of their store and to choose a site that will meet the requirements of the retailer. They are also responsible for being familiar with the type of merchandise and the type of merchandising associated with the store, the competition, and the potential of the market.

A student working on this assignment at the F. I. T. library would consult the files on the store in question and on the geographic location. For example, a student wishing to locate a branch of Macy's in Tucson, Arizona would first consult the file titled "Marketing-Retail Stores-Macy's" to discover Macy's target market, current expansion plans, store promotions, mode of advertising, etc. He or she would next examine the file titled "Marketing-Site Location-Arizona-Tucson" to discover the demographics of the Tucson market, lifestyle preferences, and marketing centers. In the same file, the student will find out about potential competitors in the Tucson market such as Goldwater's and Levy's. Finally, the student may wish to consult the files on those competitors to study their policies, target markets, etc. The vertical file materials are further supported by government and Conference Board publications and special demographic studies which are actively collected by our librarians. The result will be an accurate picture of the Tucson market and enough information to enable the student to judge the efficacy of locating a branch of Macy's in that city.

If, on the other hand, a student wished to explore the influence of the designer label on the jeans industry, we would recommend that he or she begin with our file titled "Marketing-Jeans," beginning with the most recent materials and working his or her way backward several years to the point at which the designer influence first began to be felt. If he or she wanted further information regarding the designer influence in general, we would suggest that our "Marketing-Designer Merchandise" file be read.

The vertical files function similarly for the Advertising and Communications curriculum, and often the two fields are virtually inseparable. A frequent assignment at F. I. T. involves planning an advertising campaign for the

DeBeers Diamond Co. In the marketing section of the file, the student would first consult the file titled "Marketing-Jewelry-DeBeers," where he or she would find information on past, present and future promotions undertaken by DeBeers as well as general information on the company. In the file labled simply "Marketing-Jewelry" he or she would get a picture of the industry in general. Moving on to the Advertising and Communications area, the student would consult the files on individual magazines such as McCall's, Redbook and Vogue which contain readership profiles and statistics, policy information and share of market. This information may be supplemented by the use of specialized advertising services such as the Target Group Index, the Standard Rate and Data Service and the Media Book. This combination of materials would enable the student to plan his or her advertising campaign and budget.

The Textile Industry section of the vertical file contains information on many of the major fiber and fabric houses of the country filed severally as well as files on such topics as care, content and flammability labeling, durable press and nonwoven fabrics. Similarly, the Apparel Industry section of the file includes materials on the individual technical processes involved in garment construction as well as histories of the I.L.G.W.U. and A.C.T.W.U.

Access to the vertical files is facilitated by means of subject heading lists which are always available at both the business/industry reference desk and in the vertical file area itself. The file is serviced by a squad of graduate student assistants and are limited to use within the library only. Adequate photocopying facilities are available so that the students may copy those articles most relevant to their assignment.

The librarian at the business/industry reference desk always interviews the students regarding their projects before suggesting appropriate subject headings. Book and government document materials are simultaneously recommended to supplement the file use. Many of these materials are kept in a closed shelf reference area behind the desk itself. These include standard business directories, specialized apparel and retailing business directories, Fairchild Fact Files and Salesman's Guides. Many of the special directories are annual issues of industry periodicals. Although the periodicals are shelved elsewhere, the heavily-used directory issues are kept at the business/industry reference desk.

Each of the librarians in the area actively seeks out support materials in the form of books, government publications and pamphlets as well as audio-visual materials to enhance the collection. To this end we annually send letters to each of the firms included in our vertical files for additional information. Similarly, we regularly visit the Federal Bookstore and the Department of Commerce Library to examine government publications which may be beneficial to us and to our students.

To bring so much diverse material together, it has been the practice of the F. I. T. library to conduct a series of "orientation" or library instruction seminars keyed specifically to particular courses. At these orientation sessions, the students are introduced to the files and books, etc. which will aid them most directly in completing their assignments. Using a hands-on approach and many visual aids, every effort is made to familiarize the students with the library and its varied resources. This includes instruction in the use of the card catalog and periodical indexes. A video-tape general introduction to the library has recently been completed to encourage entering freshmen to avail themselves of this highly-specialized resource.

CONCLUSION

In order, therefore, to meet the needs of a highly-specialized curriculum geared to a rapidly changing industry, the library of the Fashion Institute of Technology has adapted a mode of operation more frequently encountered in the special libraries of business and industry. This innovative solution largely centers around the vertical files which contain information unavailable elsewhere, but essential to our students' class assignments. The material is arranged in such a way as to facilitate the students' research, and support materials are made available wherever possible. So successful has this approach been that we find we are heavily utilized by members of the industry at large as well as by anyone interested in any aspect of apparel or textile research.

Ms. Ostrow was formerly employed by the New York Public Library where she served as a librarian in both the Research Division and the Branch Library System. She received her M.A. in English Literature from Hunter College, C.U.N.Y. (1975), her M.S. in Library Service from Columbia University (1970), and her B.A. in English and Comparative Literature from the City College of New York, C.U.N.Y. (1969). She is a member of the American Library Association, the Association of College and Research Libraries and the New York Library Assocation.

AN EDUCATIONAL APPROACH TO WORD PROCESSING

by Marcia Kucera
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and
Esther Sabol
Coordinator, Model Office
Secretarial Sciences Department
Broome Community College

For the past two years a Model Office/Word Processing Center has successfully provided senior Secretarial Sciences students at Broome Community College with a practical on-campus work experience.

The History

In 1974, the Secretarial Sciences Department members at Broome sought to determine what adjustments should be made in the departmental offerings to coincide with trends taking place in the business world. During a year of sabbatical leave, Professor Evelyn Katusak gathered information from past graduates and met with company and academic representatives throughout the United States. Ms. Katusak determined that the Secretarial Sciences curriculum needed a work experience program for its students.

Department members began to discuss the possibility of operating a "model office" that would give secretarial students work experience on the campus and, at the same time, expose students to word processing concepts. Marie Davenport, Chairperson of the Department at that time, was instrumental in procuring approximately $100,000 of Vocational Education Act funding for the purpose of establishing an on-campus work experience program.

During the 1977-78 academic year, Marcia Kucera, the Chairperson of the Department, acted as the Director of the grant. Mrs. Kucera selected and purchased supplies and equipment, supervised renovations, determined office layout, and handled all the detail work in preparation for the opening of the Office. In addition, she was able to secure additional funding, which by the third year of operation will represent approximately $200,000 in combined county and VEA support for the project.

During the summer of 1978, Esther Sabol was hired as the Model Office Coordinator. Mrs. Sabol's major responsibilities were to prepare the Policies and Procedures Manual and the Word Originator's Guide for the office; learn to operate the sophisticated equipment; and, in general, make ready the procedural aspects of the operation. She is now responsible for coordinating/managing office activities, instructing office employees in the use of equipment, and overseeing the smooth operation of the center.

During the first academic year of operation, approximately 85 students were "employed" in the model office. These "employees" were enrolled in SEC260, Directed Secretarial Experience, which is now a two-credit graduation requirement for all two-year degree secretarial students. Another course SEC261, Extended Secretarial Experience, was approved by the department the second year. Students who had successfully completed SEC260 could elect to take SEC261 as their free elective or business elective.

Campus acceptance and use of the center has been widespread. Administrators, faculty, and staff use the center to produce their communications. Projects produced have ranged from simple letters and memorandums to elaborate manual preparation.

In creating an on-campus program of this type, the Secretarial Sciences Department members feel confident that they have been able to provide both the classroom and on-the-job training needed to produce qualified office employees.

The Beginning

Since the success of the center was dependent on the willingness of campus employees to use the center for their secretarial work, a great deal of positive publicity was needed to inform campus personnel of the advantages of such a service. Because some individuals in the secretarial ranks could have viewed the planning of a word processing center as a direct threat to their positions, it was important to carefully explain to these individuals that their positions were not in danger. Once the full-time secretarial staff realized that students would be working in the center and that in no way could these students replace experienced secretaries on campus, fears were nonexistent. In fact, it was some of the senior secretaries on campus who first recognized the potential of the services to be offered by the center.

Six months before the center was ready for start-up activities, the first informational session regarding the operation was held for campus administrators. The advantages of the dial-in dictation system, the concept of storage of repetitive documents, and the concept of quick revision and "easy editing" were introduced for the purpose of creating enthusiasm for the center. It was apparent that administrative support of the project would in turn foster support from other campus groups.

Once the center was ready to begin operating, dictation training sessions were held for the campus employees. In these sessions, potential users of the center were instructed in correct dictation techniques, correct procedures for submitting materials to the center in rough draft form, and in other general procedural aspects of the operation. User preferences regarding signature lines, title, and complimentary closings for communications were also discussed. The word originator was able to maintain the same personal touch that he or she was accustomed to when dealing with his or her own secretary by completing a form which would alert the student employees in the center to personal preferences and style.

Faculty development sessions were also held to inform faculty members of the services available to them in the way of thesis work, publications, or speech preparation as well as classroom material preparation (with the exception of test materials, of course). Tours of the model office were also part of the publicity efforts. Consequently, during the first semester of operation, the center's acceptance on campus was excellent. During the first fifteen weeks of operation, the workload became extremely heavy due to the widespread acceptance of the center and the quality of work being produced by center employees.

Manuals

A Word Originator's Guide is given to each potential user of the center. This booklet contains general information regarding the center's operating policies and procedures such as a priority listing of documents submitted, a detail of the work request form, a review of revision marks, and a summary of dial-in dictation instructions.

A Policies and Procedures Manual is used by the center employees as a reference source. This manual details information such as the college and office organization, objectives and responsibilities, forms, equipment and supplies, communication format, filing and storage of documents, mail delivery.

The Coordinator

Being the only full-time, salaried employee working in the center, the coordinator manages the office and its functions. The initial success of the center depended greatly on this key individual. Having worked in various office jobs on the campus prior to taking this position, the coordinator was very familiar with campus policies, procedures, and personnel. She had had several years of secretarial experience and held a two-year degree in a secretarial-related field. The coordinator handles all types of responsibilities as they relate to student/employee supervision and education in the center. She instructs students in equipment operation and office procedures as well.

The Operation

The center is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. As part of the secretarial curriculum, each student is required to spend four, 50-minute class hours a week working as an employee in the model office. The employee's time is accurately recorded by the use of a time clock which must be used as he/she enters and leaves the center. Most of the employee's time is scheduled in two-hour work sessions.

At the beginning of each semester, the coordinator spends the first few days of operation discussing the Policies and Procedures Manual with the students.

After this orientation period, the center is ready to accept work. It is then the coordinator's responsibility to control the amount of work entering and leaving the center. As might be expected, "turn-around" time during the first part of the semester is slow; however, as students become familiar with procedures and equipment, the office can handle an increased workload.

The layout of the office is in the form of "work stations." Each student is assigned to a particular station on a weekly rotational basis. The employee must prepare the work given to him/her on the equipment located at the work station.

Job descriptions have been developed, and each student is required to spend at least one work session in each of the ten stations in the office. The job titles are Receptionist, Administrative Secretary, and Corresponding Secretary. One student is assigned as a receptionist, one an administrative secretary, and the remaining students are assigned to corresponding secretary positions. A corresponding secretary would be assigned as a mag card II operator or a memory typewriter operator or a CRT text editor operator on a weekly rotating basis. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the duties and equipment peculiar to each job description and work station.

The coordinator of the center receives all incoming materials by way of the dial-in dictation system or in rough draft form. The coordinator determines how the information would best be prepared; that is, by using the mag card typewriter, text editor equipment, etc. Those projects which must be permanently stored are produced by using the mag card typewriter (which uses the magnetic card as a storage medium) or the text editor (which uses the floppy diskette as a storage medium). Communications that must be stored for a short period of time or use phrase storage are entered on the memory typewriter or the electronic 75 (which has limited storage capacity). When dictation occurs or written material is submitted to the center, a work request form is completed and attached to the dictated cassette tape or to the rough draft materials. Specific information is given on the work request form which instructs the student in appropriate material handling and preparation.

Once the coordinator is confident that the work request form is complete, she assigns a priority to the material. A priority chart, which is listed in the word originator's guide, is used for establishing workload priorities.

A computerized word management system controls the work flow in and out of the center. The system consists of a CRT screen, alphanumeric keyboard, a computer control unit, and report printer. With this sytem in operation a control is established for the work that has been submitted to the office. The center's turnaround time, backlog, status and location of each job can be immediately determined. The printer can generate reports showing performance summaries for particular work completed by the center, by each secretary, for each author, and for each department. If an individual desires to use the center, an author identification number must be keyboarded into the system. After this has been completed, whenever a job is submitted by that individual, the system will automatically record the information by author and department. Also, the system will record the date and time the work entered the center, the time, date, and secretary to whom the job was assigned, and will show at the time of completion the date the project was returned to the originator. The job number is recorded on the work request form before the job is given to the student employee who will complete the assignment. If the material cannot be completed before the student leaves for the day, the student is encouraged to file his/her unfinished project in a drawer and to continue working on the project during the next assigned work session. However, if the project had a high priority status, the next student assigned to the station would complete the project.

When the corresponding secretary does finish a job, he/she submits the completed work to the administrative secretary. It is the administrative secretary's responsibility to proofread the material and check for proper format. The secretary may even listen to the dictated tape to be sure that the information produced is correct. Once it has been determined that the material is correctly completed and does not require duplication, the administrative secretary files a copy of the document at his/her work station and gives the project to the Coordinator. If the secretary does find an error, however, he/she returns the material to the corresponding secretary for corrections.

If the project does not need duplication or correction, the material is forwarded to the coordinator for one final checking. The coordinator scans the material to determine if the job is complete according to the information that he/she had initially indicated on the work request form. The material is then forwarded to the receptionist who holds the material for pick-up by the originator, forwards the completed projects by campus mail, or hand-delivers the material.

Because the computerized logging system is used in the center, the location and status of any job can be immediately determined. At any given time, the coordinator is able to check the date the project was assigned, who is working on the project, and when the project will most likely be completed. The administrative secretary is able to determine if material is in the duplication, correction, or final completion stage. At the end of the semester, reports can be generated showing the productivity of the center.

Employee performance is evaluated twice during the semester. The coordinator completes an evaluation form for each employee, and the employee completes a self-evaluation form. Coordinator/employee conferences are held at mid-semester and at the end of the semester to alert students to their strengths and weaknesses. The coordinator finds the sessions helpful in that she is able to encourage the student to become a more effective office employee.

An office meeting is held each semester. Students voice their opinions regarding office operation, policies, and procedures. A student is assigned to take minutes at these meetings, and the minutes are then prepared as part of that student's work experience in the model office. Speakers from local industry, films, and lectures have been a part of the office meetings as well.

Although the office meetings are not mandatory, the student can use his/her attendance at this meeting as one hour of work time. It is in this manner that the student develops a sense of responsibility to the office and his/her co-workers. Refreshments are usually served, and informal discussion is encouraged.

The Equipment

Because the Model Office/Word Processing Center has a dual purpose--that of providing students with word processing work experience as well as acting as a secretarial support service for the campus--it was necessary to purchase an unusual mix of equipment.

Educationally, it was important that the center have a wide representation of equipment (especially keyboards) in order to expose students to the diversity of word processing equipment that they might encounter in their future jobs. Functionally, it was important to select equipment for the office that would provide the center with enough keyboarding power to adequately serve the needs of the campus. Local vendor support was also a crucial factor in equipment choices.

Dictation Equipment

A dial-in dictation system, which uses cassette tapes, is used in the center. Through the use of this system, administrators, faculty, and staff can dictate directly to the center by using their office telephones. Employees can also dictate from their homes as well as from anywhere in the world--24 hours a day. Three central recording units are located within the center--with a capacity to handle the dictation needs of approximately 300 employees. An attendant phone, which is an integral part of the system, allows the user to contact the coordinator at any point in the dictation should questions or problems occur.

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Because the word processing center "employs" no more than ten students in any one working session, ten transcribers are available for their use.

Keyboarding Equipment

The keyboarding equipment in the center represents progression from the most elementary of keyboarding equipment, the correcting selectric, to the most complex, the text editor.

From an educational standpoint, it is important that student employees begin preparing material on the correcting selectrics (basic error correction concept) and then progress to the more sophisticated keyboards for complicated editing requirements.

The following keyboards are used in the center: 7 correcting selectrics, 1 electronic 75 typewriter, 2 electronic 50 typewriters, 2 electronic 60 typewriters, 2 memory 100 typewriters, 1 mag II typewriter, and 1 text editing typewriter. By using this variety of keyboards, students are able to understand the concept of storage, memory, and the various methods of editing, correcting, updating, etc. The student also becomes accustomed to the type of machine he/she prefers to use as well as to the appropriateness of a certain machine for a particular job type.

Miscellaneous Equipment

Since it is important both as an educational tool and as a support service to see a project through from start to finish, the center is also equipped with spirit and mimeograph duplicating machines, a copy machine, a thermofax machine, a stencil maker, collator, and paper jogger.

The Benefits

After two years of operation, it has become evident that students, administration, faculty, and staff have benefited greatly from the center.

Students have gained valuable work experience while learning word processing keyboards, concepts, and applications. In addition, students have been exposed to those qualities which are important to any successful employee but cannot always be taught in the traditional classroom environment--responsibility, teamwork, dependability, efficiency, and resourcefulness--to name a few.

The center has also provided students with an understanding of the type of work for which they are best suited, what machines they prefer to operate, and most importantly, the realization of individual strengths and weaknesses.

Campus employees have had the benefit of secretarial support in addition to the support of their own full-time secretaries. These secretaries can send their work overloads to the center, thus alleviating the pressure of hard-to-meet deadlines and freeing them to do more administrative tasks. Administrators admit that the policy manuals and lengthy reports produced by the center would still be "sitting on their desks" had they not had the availability of the center's service. In fact, it seems that projects came "out of the woodwork." Administrators also admit that some of the documents produced by the center would never have been produced for fear of burdening their own secretaries with material which might require numerous revision and major editing.

The Secretarial Sciences Department has been able to fulfill its goal of exposing students to on-campus, supervised work experience, thus providing the students with a "headstart" before entering the job market.

The center has received recognition as an innovative approach to word processing education from educators throughout New York State and as far away as South America. Numerous company and educational representatives have visited the center. The department has used the center as a recruitment tool by giving tours to area high school students and faculty.

All things considered, the Model Office/Word Processing Center has proven its worth both as a credible campus service and an innovative educational tool.

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Mrs. Kucera is presently Personnel Administrator with McNeil Consumer Products Company, a subsidiary of Johnson and Johnson and the manufacturer of Tylenol. Her responsibilities include employment and the training and development functions.

Esther Sabol holds an A.A.S. degree in Business from Broome Community College and is currently working toward a B.S. degree at the State University of New York at Binghamton. She started her secretarial career at IBM, Owego, New York. After a few years, she left her position at IBM when marriage and family responsibilities required her full attention at home. Approximately eight years ago, she started working at Broome as a part-time secretary. Before accepting her current position, as coordinator of the model office, she held a number of different part-time and full-time secretarial positions at the college, the most recent were secretary to the Dean of the Business Division and disbursement officer for Financial Aid. She is a member of Phi Theta Kappa, the national honor society for junior colleges.

COLLEGE AND CAREER INFORMATION DAY — AN EXPERIMENT THAT WORKED

by Jacqueline McCoy-Nicolette, Assistant Professor
and
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Niagara County Community College

The need for extensive career education has long been recognized by the educational profession. Resources available to meet these needs have become increasingly limited at the high school level. As high school guidance counselors are called upon to take on more clerical responsibilities, scheduling, and standardized test administration and interpretation, their ability to provide career counseling has been impeded.

The consequences of this situation were observable at Niagara County Community College in several ways; among them, later admission application dates, the increased number of changes of curricula and a lack of direction exhibited by both incoming freshmen and enrolled students. Because of the college's committment to meeting community needs, a program was created to try to supplement the career education attempts of the local high schools.

Utilizing NCCC faculty as the primary resource, the program, entitled College and Career Information Day (CCI Day), was conceived to provide information to high school students about numerous careers and programs of college study. The program's intention was to invite students from all of the area high schools to the NCCC campus to attend three classes of their choice dealing with career and college options. They would do this by following a simulated college schedule. This schedule would include three forty-five minute class sessions and a designated time for lunch with cultural, entertainment, and recreational activities also planned for that same time segment.

Working through a standing committee of the Faculty Senate, coordination was begun to implement the concept of the first College and Career Information Day. The first step was to survey high school guidance counselors to determine interest in the program, a convenient date, and the ability of their students to participate. The survey revealed sufficient interest to continue planning, so each NCCC faculty member was asked to prepare workshops/classes or volunteer for administrative duties. Faculty support for the program was positive and a total of 57 courses was developed and offered. These courses included such diverse titles as: Women in the Job Market; College Freshmen Survival Kit: Math and Science, Test-Taking Strategies; Studies and Careers in Business; Careers in Nursing; TV--Behind the Scenes; and Legal Aspects of Criminal Justice. The President of the College communicated with the school superintendents and building principals, urging them to support the program. Registration materials, including a three-part registration form, a list of course offerings, and instructions, were developed and distributed to the high schools that had expressed interest in the program.

Guidance counselors were a crucial link in the organization of College and Career Information Day. They handled the entire registration procedure at the high school level, instructing the students to select six course choices and to fill out the appropriate forms. The completed forms were collected and a committee of NCCC faculty proceeded to manually register each student for three of his/her six choices. Schedules for the day were returned to the high schools for distribution prior to College and Career Information Day.

On the morning of College and Career Information Day, May 24, 1979, students and their counselors assembled in the college auditorium for a welcome by the NCCC administration, instructions and an overview of the day's events. Students then followed their individual schedules for classes and lunchtime activities. NCCC students and faculty acted as guides, directing the high school visitors to the classrooms. The day's activities concluded at 2 p.m. -- allowing sufficient time for the students' return to their high schools for regular dismissal. A final review of CCI Day showed that nearly 600 students from 13 different high schools participated. The college was pleased with this response, and in order to determine the success of the program, a follow-up survey of students and counselors was conducted.

This survey indicated a definite enthusiasm for the program. The following comments volunteered by students and counselors show the support for the program.

> "On the whole, the program was excellent, especially the play during the lunch period. The speakers in each presentation knew what they were talking about and could answer the questions anyone had -- Thank you."
>
> "I thought the day on the whole was very informative."
>
> "I enjoyed the Career Day very much and if it is held again next year I shall return. Nothing will keep me away. Definitely have the Career Day again next year."
>
> "The idea and planning were very good. Perhaps having it earlier in the year would be helpful."

Opinions such as these prompted the College to incorporate CCI Day as an annual event. With some significant changes, CCI Day was again offered on March 25, 1980. Attendance at this year's program doubled: 1200 students from 20 different high schools participated in CCI Day 1980.

The major change in the 1980 version of College and Career Information Day was designed to alleviate the tedious task of manually registering each student for the three classes. Arthur Hadley, Associate Professor of Mathematics, developed a computer program for registration of the participants. After working out the bugs in the system, the computer program was used successfully to register all 1200 students for three of their six course selections, with their first choice guaranteed. Each student then received a computer printed schedule with a map of the college included to assist them in finding their classes.

CCI Day 1980 also brought about a change in date. Originally CCI Day was scheduled for the end of May, after NCCC Spring Semester classes had ended but faculty were still on campus and available to conduct workshops. However, it was found that this date was not the most convenient for high school involvement. A proposal was made and adopted by the College whereby a March date was selected. NCCC classes for that day were postponed and the semester was, in effect, extended by one day. This date proved more effective in accommodating the needs of the high schools wishing to participate.

In addition to the change in date, a minor alteration was made in the program schedule. The first CCI Day followed a schedule of a welcome/instruction assembly, two workshops/classes, lunch and entertainment, followed by the third workshop/class and, finally, dismissal. Because of distance or school regulations, some schools had to leave early, thus reducing attendance at the third class session. It was decided to hold all three class sessions in the morning, with lunch and entertainment following and, then, dismissal. This gave every school the opportunity to attend all three workshops/classes prior to departure.

Another change was an increase in publicity at the local high schools. In addition to telephone contacts as a very important aspect in coordinating such an extensive program, flyers, posters, and other descriptive materials were used to create and enhance interest among counselors and students as well. A brief description of each course was provided in the promotional material and seemed to generate greater interest on the part of students. "Word of mouth" was also an important asset to the event. Students who had expressed an interest in the program soon spread the word that CCI Day provided valuable information. A snowball effect developed and registrations far outnumbered the original estimates of both the high school counselors and the NCCC faculty coordinating the program.

Finally, an additional service was developed to better serve the counselors involved with CCI Day. This service took the form of a coffee room, where NCCC faculty, administration, and counselors could meet and discuss mutual concerns with the visiting high school counselors and faculty.

The growth of College and Career Information Day over the last two years has indicated the need and desire of the high schools for career programs of this type. A survey of high school students, counselors, and NCCC faculty conducted after CCI Day, showed tremendous support for the event. Its continuance as a community service is probable. Eighty-three percent of the students who responded judged the program to be very good to excellent. (Total response: 33%). Seventy-eight and seven tenths percent of the counselors determined the program to be very good to excellent. (Total reponse: 51%.) NCCC faculty responded in kind: 86.3 percent rated CCI Day very good to excellent. (Total reponse: 68% of participating faculty.) This type of response represents the enthusiasm for the CCI Day program by both the high schools and the college.

A career program such as this requires extensive planning, cooperation on the part of college administration, faculty, and staff, as well as the cooperation of the high school administrations, faculty, counselors, and, of course, the students themselves. In developing and sponsoring CCI Day, Niagara County Community College has discovered that the energy exerted is well worth the effort in terms of the benefits derived from the program. NCCC faculty experience an opportunity to work with a different clientele; a closer relationship between the College and the high schools is developed; the local high school students receive a quality program to assist them in making career and college decisions; and the College continues to play an important role in the community thus strengthening its image as a community resource.

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JANUARY MINISEMESTERS: A SPECIALIZED TOOL FOR S.U.N.Y. COMMUNITY COLLEGES

by Richard J. Meagher
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January minisemesters offer the SUNY community colleges a unique opportunity to experiment with special courses and to meet special needs of students. They are perhaps underutilized because not enough educators in the SUNY network of community colleges are sufficiently aware of the possibilities open to them.

A January minisemester is an intensive three- (or sometimes two-) week short semester carved out of the time between the end of the fall semester and the start of the spring semester. Course offerings often include innovative, specially-developed curricula that cannot be offered during a regular semester. Another approach is to offer popular or required basic courses which students can use either to make up for what they failed to take in the previous semester or to lighten the prospective load in the subsequent semester.

Students are generally limited to a single course and are expected to immerse themselves in the subject matter for the concentrated time period. Those served are primarily full-time day students, with part-time evening students being a distant second and new-to-the institution students being an even more distant third.

How did January Minisemesters come into existence?

Traditional college calendars called for a fall semester beginning after Labor Day, pausing for a two-week Christmas break, and drawing to a leisurely close somewhat past the middle of January. After an intersession of a week or more, the spring semester would begin in late January or early February and usually end in early June. Dissatisfaction with what was commonly called the "lame duck" period in the fall semester after the Christmas break led a growing number of colleges to alter the traditional calendar format by beginning before Labor Day in order to end the fall semester before Christmas. If the spring semester was left basically untouched, the result of the fall changes was a new three-week free period in January coming on the heels of the still-traditional two-week holiday recess.

Faced with this new time period to play with, colleges began experimenting with potential innovative educational uses. The basic result was the January minisemester.

Why have a January Minisemester?

Any individual campus may have one or more reasons for developing a January minisemester unique to that campus, but there are some broad underlying premises with general applicability. Perhaps the most important is plant-utilization. With the heavy capital investment in college campuses, can those in charge afford to let their buildings stand idle for significant periods of time?

The proliferation of basic skills programs and other essentially remedial programs for underprepared students at "full opportunity" community colleges has added to the already crowded four-semester program load for many full-time day students. Something has to give in order to accommodate this built-in program overload. Sometimes the answer is to have a student remain for five semesters, but a judicious use of summer sessions and January minisemesters can assist the diligent student to keep up with his or her cohort.

Certainly the most visible reason for having a January minisemester is the prospect of curriculum innovation and enrichment. Administrators and faculties are often enthused at the possibilities of creating a concentrated academic experience that cannot be duplicated in the three-hour-per-week, 15-week "regular" semester.

In certain fields skills can be sharpened, and students can keep from getting stale in noncredit offerings designed for them, as Illustration students do in drawing classes and Fashion Design students do in draping classes in the January minisemester at the Fashion Institute of Technology. Institutions may also want to consider extending learning opportunities for employed adult students, particularly through an evening component of a January minisemester.

Finally, institutions such as the SUNY community colleges may want to entice full-time day students to pay a higher share of their total cost of education by registering (and paying) for a January minisemester course. Full-time day students pay a wholesale price for a credit "basket" that ranges from 12 to 18 or 19 credits or even higher in the fall and spring semesters. Three credits not taken in the "basket" at the wholesale price may be purchased at retail in the January minisemester. The student thereby contributes more to the total cost of education than he or she would concentrating all courses taken under the wholesale price.

What are some major problems facing January Minisemesters?

The rise in heating costs may mean the ultimate extinction of the January minisemester, as colleges choose to close down their entire campus or major portions thereof to save money. However, if such drastic moves are eventually made, they will hopefully occur only after careful costing out of income lost versus actual savings. If buildings remain open and heated because office staff continue to work, then savings are illusionary and a cancelled January minisemester will only mean lost income.

The wrong mix of courses for the potential audience can also spell disaster on a particular campus. When administrators and faculty forecast what students want, or worse, what would be good for students, the results can be particularly painful in a January minisemester, the small size of which serves to magnify any missteps taken or mistakes made.

Not enough or off-center promotion of the January minisemester can be especially damaging. An unknown product is an unsold product. Off-campus advertising used when almost all potential students are already on campus is wasteful. Posters and student mail insertions should not be overlooked, nor should the student newspaper. Department chairpeople and potential minisemester faculty should be tapped in the promotional effort as well.

Financial aid programs are generally not applicable to January minisemesters, thereby freezing out potential students who do not have discretionary funds available.

Survey of Thirty S.U.N.Y. Community Colleges

I surveyed the thirty S.U.N.Y. community colleges as to their experience with January minisemesters. Thirteen are currently offering one. Nine tried it one or more times and then gave it up. Eight have never tried one.

The following capsule summaries reflect the current situation:

Never tried a January Minisemester

Of the eight community colleges that have never tried a January minisemester, two (Mohawk Valley and Schenectady) are on the quarter system and therefore have no room in their calendar. Another, Onondaga, also has no room in the academic calendar. Two others (Adirondack and Jefferson) have relatively sparse service population areas and also cite such factors as lack of sufficient interest; heating cost; and weather. The remaining three (Erie, Nassau, Orange) have specific reasons for not trying one, but behind those reasons seems to lurk a lack of positive direction.

Nassau, for example, cites faculty concern as the reason for not trying one in the populous Long Island suburban county with relatively mild winters. A January minisemester there is perceived by the unionized faculty as a potential wedge to require extra work as a future part of the required load. That perception, however deeply ingrained, could be changed if the effort was considered worthwhile.

However, it should be noted that a student questionnaire is being administered to determine interest in a potential summer minisemester.

Erie, a multi-campus community college serving Buffalo, understandably lists weather as one reason for not attempting a January minisemester, but also stresses that salary costs would be "very expensive" under the faculty contract. Orange cites lack of interest one year and a calendar with no room in it in the current year as reasons. With purposeful direction, Erie's and Orange's reasons would melt away (except possibly Erie's snow) as easily as I believe Nassau's faculty concern could.

Tried January Minisemester and Gave Them Up

Dutchess Community College ran its last January minisemester in 1979 and had 525 students in 23 classes, moderately higher than the totals for the college's first try in 1975 with 430 students for 20 classes. Dutchess's minisemester was fairly typical in that it consisted of a balance of basic courses and special programming, was aimed primarily at the college's full-time day students, and was promoted internally on campus. The administrator responsible for the minisemester viewed the operation as financially successful. Only one thing was wrong; the college closed it down in order to create a second summer day session which Dutchess CC officials, after much debate, felt would have potentially greater success than the January minisemester.

Niagara CCC, on the other hand, tried it once in 1978 and gave it up after attracting 30 students to six courses. The approach was also the typical one with a mixture of basic courses and special programming designed primarily for full-time day students and promoted internally on campus. It was not financially successful because of the low enrollment. Reasons for dropping the concept, in addition to the low enrollment figures, included the reluctance of students to enroll in the special programming partly because of concern over their transferability; a sense that most students want to work or be on vacation during this period; and concern about the weather.

Westchester CC, like Dutchess CC, ran its last January minisemester in 1979 with 690 students in 36 classes, up from 536 students in 25 classes in 1974. The minisemester offered a balance of basic courses and special programming to full-time day and transfer students with an internal promotional effort. The minisemester was financially successful "using direct costs only," and Westchester CC chose to eliminate the session because of "lack of sufficient enrollments and student support."

Ulster CCC in Stone Ridge ran its first January minisemester in 1970 with 145 students in 11 classes, with an internal promotion aimed at full-time day students with programming consisting of basic courses. The last January minisemester was held in 1978 with 127 students in 9 classes. Ulster CCC considered it financially unsuccessful and dropped it as of 1979, planning, however, to try a warm-weather version of it in the summer.

Genesee CC in Batavia ran its last January minisemester in 1976 with 180 students in 12 clases, with an internal and external promotion aimed at full-time day students, and with a programming emphasis on basic courses. The first one had been held in 1970 with 134 students in 11 classes. Genesee CC considered the minisemester to be financially unsuccessful because of "student/faculty ratio requirements" and eliminated it because of a "drop in student interest."

Monroe CC in Rochester tried developing a January minisemester only once, in 1973, attracting approximately 240 students in 12 classes with an internal promotion aimed at full-time day students with a mix of basic courses and special programming. Contractual and faculty governance issues seem to have combined to have made the experience a traumatic one for all involved. When those issues were overlaid with "limited student interest," the experience was not repeated.

Broome CC in Binghamton tried a January minisemester for two years, starting with 106 students in 6 courses in 1977 and ending with 190 students in 11 courses the following year. The College changed the academic calendar for 1979, leaving no room for its continuance. The minisemesters had "paid their way" and consisted of basic courses for full-time day students with an internal promotional effort.

Clinton CC in Plattsburgh was able to run one course with 16 students in 1978 out of four courses offered. Of three classes planned for 1979, however, none materialized, and the college gave up on the idea, citing "poor response." The offerings had been a mixture of basic courses and special programming, promoted both interally and externally, and aimed at part-time students.

Columbia-Greene CC in Hudson ran minisemesters from 1973 to 1976, then suspended them for three years, and no has reinstated the January minisemester for 1980 with an intended schedule of 13 basic classes to be promoted externally.

Currently Running a January Minisemester

Cayuga CCC in Auburn ran their first January minisemester in 1979 with 198 students in 28 classes. The program consisted of basic courses and is aimed at both full-time day students and students from the area who are home for the holidays from other colleges. The promotion is direction both internally and externally. The 1979 experience was financially successful and the enrollment prognosis is oen of stability.

Corning CC, however, is "trying it for one more year." Enrollment at Corning has declined from 351 students in 26 courses in 1973 to 198 students in 14 courses in 1979. Minisemesters have been only "reasonably" financially successful and the enrollment prognosis is for a continued decline. The program consists of basic courses designed for full-time day students and promoted internally. A clue to the problem may be found in another comment on programming: "based on faculty wishing to teach." A successful minisemester cannot be built, except by accident, around faculty who make themselves available. There must be a deeper institutional commitment.

The Fashion Institute of Technology has had a steadily rising January minisemester enrollment from the first attempt in 1975 with 412 students in 18 courses to 1979 with 1,258 students in 55 courses. The program is a blend of basic courses and special programming. While the main source of enrollment is full-time day students, an attempt is alos made to provide learning opportunities for those part-time evening students who want to tackle a concentrated curriculum. In addition, a vigorous internal promotion is supplemented by some outside print advertising to "hedge one's bet" and yield some new students from the outside world. For example, one year a $2,000 investment produced only 50 new students. F.I.T.'s minisemester is financially successful, and the future should bring stability in enrollment and perhaps moderate growth.

The Community College of the Finger Lakes in Canadaigua ran its first January minisemester in 1979, achieving an enrollment of 164 students in 12 classes which represented a blend of basic courses and special programming. The main source of enrollment was full-time day students, but promotional activities were both internal and external. The first minisemester was financially successful, and the prognosis is for stability in enrollment.

Fulton-Montgomery CC in Johnstown had an unusual first attempt at a January minisemester in 1973 with an enrollment of 459 students in 45 courses. The unusual feature was that students were not charged tuition. After the college was subsequently informed that this practice was not permitted, enrollment not so surprisingly declined to 83 students in 8 classes as of 1979. An internal promotion is aimed at full-time day students resulting in a fiscally "break-even situation, at best." The prognosis is "hopefully" one of moderate growth for a program that offers both basic courses and special programming.

North Country CC in Saranac Lake ran its first January minisemester in 1970 with 281 students in 23 classes. Enrollment has grown to a total of 397 students in 25 classes as of 1979. The internal promotion is aimed primarily at full-time day students, and the offerings are a balance of basic courses and special programming. The minisemesters have been viewed as financially successful, and the prognosis is for future growth in enrollment.

Hudson Valley CC in Troy ran its first January minisemester in 1976 with 64 students in 3 classes. In 1979 seven courses were offered to an audience of full-time day students through internal promotion. The enrollment outlook for the financially successful January minisemesters is one of stability to moderate growth. The program emphasis is on basic courses. An unusual feature of the Hudson Valley minisemester calendar is that the three-week session begins with the week between Christmas and New Year's instead of beginning after New Year's as most others do.

Jamestown CC opened its first minisemester in 1973 with an absolutely immodest 1,053 students in 337 classes. The minisemester emphasized special programming for community adults with a corresponding emphasis on external promotion. Still financially successful, enrollment has declined to 513 students in 103 classes. The prognosis is for a further decline. A unique program in perhaps a unique area, the Jamestown CC January minisemester is worthy of additional, specialized research.

Suffolk CCC, a multi-campus institution serving suburban Suffolk County on Long Island, is another newcomer to the January minisemester field, having developed its first one in 1979, yielding a total of 462 students in 12 classes. With such a high average class size, it is not surprising that the minisemester was financially successful. An internal promotional effort was used to attract full-time day students and part-time evening students to a program of basic courses. The future should bring growth in enrollment.

Sullivan CCC in Loch Sheldrake has shown a growth in January minisemester enrollment from 110 students in 11 courses in 1972 to 172 students in 12 courses in 1979. The program consists of basic courses "with a few special topics," is promoted internally to full-time day students, has been financially successful, and expects stability in future enrollment.

Rockland CC in Suffern ran its first January minisemester in 1975 with 134 students in 12 courses. Although the main sources of students, full-time day students and evening students, the promotional emphasis is nonetheless directed externally off-campus. Enrollment has grown to 287 students in 32 courses in 1979, and the prognosis is for future growth. The January minisemester offers a balance of basic courses and special programming. Finally, "to date they have managed to cover expenses but have not yielded a surplus."

Tompkins-Cortland CC in Dryden achieved an enrollment of 215 students in 26 courses in 1979, up from 31 students in 4 courses in 1975. Registrations "have grown consistently" and the prognosis is for future growth. The program consists mainly of basic courses and is promoted internally to an audience of full-time day students. The January minisemester is considered financially successful. Some homespun minisemester wisdom can be found in the characterization that "the basic courses make it; the 'fancy' things usually don't."

Herkimer CCC has been in the January minisemester business since 1972 when 87 students were attracted to the 14 courses offered to them. By 1979 the student count had grown to 285 students in 15 courses, recruited internally from the ranks of full-time day students. The prognosis is for future growth of the financially successful minisemester with its programming emphasis on basic courses.

Conclusion

The network of S.U.N.Y. community colleges sometimes seems to be less a network and more a 19th century grouping of German principalities. This brief examination of January minisemesters shows each campus evolving its own approach: some succeeding and some failing; some acting and some choosing consciously or otherwise not to act; and, except perhaps for an occasional exchange of brochures, no one really learning from the successes and failures of the others.

Community colleges like Nassau, Erie, and Orange should at least explore future potential for January minisemesters. Once-burned community colleges like Monroe should perhaps reconsider the possibility. Other community colleges, with tiny or shrinking enrollment, should reconsider their commitment to the concept. Successful models or at least elements of successful models should be identified and shared system-wide to help colleges decide on a perhaps more rational basis than exists at present whether to start a January minisemester, continue one, expand one, resurrect one, shrink one, or drop one. Inertia, unfortunately, is often the dominant force in higher education.

For an institution with a central location, adequate transportation, and sufficient population to be served, the future can be bright indeed. But even such an institution should have strong administrative support preferably directly from the president and from the chief fiscal officer, and should entrust final course selection to the dean or director of continuing education rather than depending solely on department heads or messianic faculty members with esoteric specialties.

Help from an even higher source than the college's president is also useful since much depends on the weather. My campus has "lucked through" six January minisemesters without ever having to cancel classes. I suspect, though, that putting this fact down on paper may lead to disaster in 1981.

NOTE: A statistical report of the minisemester survey is available from the author.

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ON THE REMYSTIFICATION OF COLLEGE TEACHING

by Richard Katims
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The thrust of the discussion that follows is that the increasingly dim prospects for enlightened higher education might be reversed through the "remystification of college teaching." By "remystification" I mean an altered perception of roles and relationships in which the level of aspiration of teachers and students is central, and in which the teacher comes to see him-or-herself in an evolving transpersonal frame. Some recent experiences in my own teaching life as a professor in a small, upstate New York community college have been especially instructive for me.

Recently, an erudite and experienced, but somewhat tired, teacher of European and Far Eastern history approached me one long afternoon and commented on the good fortune of our psychologist colleague whose discipline he considered "therapeutic." The idea was that "psychology of consciousness" but not history or political science offered the opportunity for healing or self-discovery. The conversation was brief, and I acknowledged his comments quietly; but late that night his words sprang out at me again, and I realized that, of course, she was missing something important. For it was clear that all disciplines are skeleton keys for opening the doors of perception or, better still, sliding in keyholes or slipping through cracks like mad, shamanic teaching guerillas. I realized that immersing oneself in the great traditions, the sources of one's "tribe" (history) is potentially cleansing although, perhaps, guilt-invoking and anguishing. And probing the sources of political power with the understanding of transcendance, transformation and transmutation, is ultimately healing. Every day for us is living with the paradox of being eaten up a little more with the pain of what we see by diving a little deeper--if we are really doing our work--and the healing of emerging purified, even while gasping for air.

The point, I thought, is that we are not "done in" by the subjects we teach or by the students we have. Rather, teachers tend to become entrapped within a systemized definition of roles and relationships which, when internalized, obscures the transpersonal potential for insight and growth.

Yet it is easy for that systemization to take place. Not long ago, author and social critic, Jonathan Kozol, spoke at the community college where I teach. The next day, in one of my classes, the students who had attended the lecture--and very few had--were discussing Kozol's always provocative comments. They were especially inspired by his "revelation" that students form the only clearly essential constituency on a college campus and that concerted student action could bring institutional change. Forgiving the fact that these were students of 1979 who could not clearly define the kinds of changes they might seek, their excitement about Kozol's suggestion was particularly instructive for me because, during each semester for the ten years I have been teaching, I have attempted to create an understanding of precisely that notion.

Why, I wondered, did someone coming in from the "outside" as a paid lecturer, granting his passionate articulateness and relative fame, have so much credibility as compared to a "regular" faculty member--especially one for whom the students have expressed a measure of trust and comradery?

These considerations are complex and have prompted me to return to the beginning and ask: What is a teacher, what are his or her aspirations and expectations in the context of contemporary higher education, and how might they be transformed to allow for more incisive, honest, and uplifting interactions? I find that I am led in a curious and, for me, hitherto unexpected direction in trying to formulate a response: a call for the remystification of college teaching. I am not advocating artificially tightening up some of the informal modes of communication that have recently evolved and are perhaps the only lasting reforms of the past decade of "innovation." Nor do I mean to nominate as a suitable model the distinguished, but all-too-often phantom professor who is more frequently advising presidents or corporations than on campus.

Rather, I am concerned with mystery as an expression of the core of learning itself--its discovery and transmission; and mystery as an expression of the path of aspiration toward transformed consciousness with its pervasive loneliness as well as ecstasy. In this sense, mystery is not offered as a source of confusion* but as an inducement for the active engagement of real communication among teacher and student or would-be students. It allows for a linkage of intellectual, creative and spiritual sensibilities and prepares a fertile ground for choices to be made.

I start with the assumption (or gentle suggestion) that as an aspirant himself or herself, or perhaps even a master, a teacher is an explorer of mysteries whose battles are fierce and often bloodying. One's teachings, optimally, should be to those whose aspirations are similarly expressed, or are such that a teacher can create the context which enhances the possibility for aspirations to emerge and take shape. I no longer believe that all teachers are appropriate for all students. Or that students and teachers are interchangeable, except insofar as "teachers" are continuous learners and "students" always offer instruction for the sensitive observer.

Teachers, too, are mythmakers and poets whose songs suggest that the mind is not trapped in time, opening the way to the awe and wonder they have seen or sensed. The college teacher who is engaged by this challenge in the 1980's faces a task of heroic dimensions. He or she must stare down the gorgon of institutional unconsciousness--driven by economic hardship, declining enrollments, and ill-prepared students--without the aid of mirrors. Rather, one can become mirror-like in an attempt, as Blake said, to cleanse the doors of perception.

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Mystery. The creative aspects of the mind, as Loren Eiseley suggests, emerge from and have access to a process that scientific analysis cannot fully explain. Religious symbology, poetic imagery, even great jumps in technological discovery, arise "in as mysterious a fashion as those elementary particles which leap into momentary existence in great cyclotrons, only to vanish again like infinitesimal ghosts."[1] The question, then, is how to create a context for the mind to "flare suddenly like a supernova." And it is not so much a question of understanding this mystery, but dancing in its light. Mystery is also, paradoxically, the stalking shadow of the creative spirit and cannot be approached in an atmosphere of precision and predictability which laboratories and sometimes colleges purport to be.

College teachers have helped to further the bureaucratization of their institutions by making them riskless places.* Part of the problem, altogether understandable, is that teachers come to represent the institution rather than make the institution a stopping place in which their teachings unfold. Somehow one is not considered a "teacher" without an institution to confirm the role. But no institution can confer the core of knowledge and level of awakeness which in fact describe and manifest what that person brings to a relationship to students. At a college, especially a two-year college where students pass through with relatively little stake in its day-to-day functioning, faculty (and certainly administration) often come to define the institution and its goals in terms of their own roles. Then a teacher's role becomes an obstacle to his or her mystification, or rather, it is the institutional role that becomes mystified while the teaching scatters in odd places.

As a political science teacher, I talk about the nature of institutions, including schools, and the familiar issue of how they often bring into being the very social conditions they were designed to prevent or correct. I speak about the institutional, prismic refraction of love and honest relating and sharing. Having had extensive involvement in community action experiences, I try to relate my own sense of struggle and commitment to the context of the classroom. But I find that the common perception of what I say is more a reflection of my role than my being. Students wonder not about how might my experience help to illuminate their way, but whether they are going to be tested on it.

Part of the problem is that our role, traditionally conceived, contains an inherent contradiction. We are asked to be at once purveyors of dominant social values (especially in public colleges) and the expositors of personal and cultural change. Not only are these roles difficult to reconcile; neither is wholly appropriate. The knowledge we have access to is not culture bound, no matter what subject we teach. That knowledge is of the creative spirit, the location of self (even as illusion) in the deepest layers of the mind. The remystification of college teaching calls, therefore, for an altered view of what we do and with whom.

There is, I believe, no set role for a teacher. As one who has attained or aspires to a level of mastery, he or she can be like the buddhist Bedhisattva who "plays his (or her) role instead of taking it seriously. He (or she) is a joker or 'wild' man who can play any card in the pack..."[2] The teacher, then, might be a kind of trickster, but also, when necessary, hunter, warrior, or shaman. Any archetypal mask can be worn with equal facility to widen the split between the mundane and the timeless, creative realm. And then to breach the gap by effecting a synthesis: finding the creative and transcendental in the ordinary. I have fantasized coming into class in various incongruous outfits -- tuxedo, baseball suit, hobo rags, marine battle dress, naked -- as a way of unsettling expectations and not wearing any projections as to who I am and why I am there. Identity is not a problem for the teacher because "the bodhisattva has no identity that can be pinned down."[3] He or she can act as if there is a mystery to his or her home, family, inner life, all sources of knowledge. At the same time it is precisely the impeccability of home, family and inner life which is the source of knowledge and, in our fractured society, the source of mystery as well.

This past semester, I took to walking to classes from my home through a wooded area which opens onto the campus. When I emerged with my backpack from the woods and across the athletic field, many students asked where I came from. I was careful to point vaguely behind me and tell of the sevenpoint buck I met on the path. A teacher can be like the sage who leads the homeless life of the "forest dweller."[4]

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I think, then, that in times of questless academic and professional credentialization only a mysterious teacher (who, at the same time, is totally open, because, after all, he or she is no one in particular) can help seeking students probe creative depths. By being mysterious, but open, he or she enhances the possibility of awakening the quality of awe and wonder in students. As Joseph Campbell shows, awe and wonder are functions of the mythopoeic vision of human kind. In this sense, college teaching can serve the often called-for revitalization of mythmaking in a society which has lost touch with its vital core.

Functioning as a mythmaker, the mysterious teacher (of any subject) is like a poet and alchemist. A poet-teacher is a link between personal and transpersonal experience, between the written and unwritten history of his or her culture or even species. He or she incurs the risk of dealing with what Gary Snyder, in describing the poet's calling, says are "rare and powerful states of mind"[5] and making them part of the real world of experience for those who tune in. In a culture largely devoid of "symbolic aids" in the search for wholeness, the mysterious college teacher can act as guide and ally in the world.

Thoreau once wrote that "it is the faculty of the poet to see present things as if past and future; as if distant or universally significant."[6] So, too, the teacher who can reveal the timeless nature of the mind which, in an age of excessive rationality, remains a mystery. We always come back to the example of Einstein whose greatest discoveries came in the leaps beyond equations and formulas into the realm of imagination, where energy and relativity transcend the mass of brain and speed of light. If some remnants of a tree-dwelling, small-brained creature live within us, so does our hairless, globe-skulled descendant. But the teacher must act as if he or she is the bearer of these truths and carry an air of open mystery.

If a real education is an "alchemy which draws its fire at the center,"[7] as M. C. Richards teaches, the mysterious teacher might be a guide to the fiery center and, in this way, a mythforger of sorts. He or she is in the image of both the wounded Hephaestus, who knows how to create with the fire at the center, and the tragic-heroic Prometheus who brought that fire to others. The mysterious teacher can help others to forge their own myths. From a mythological perspective, where a teacher is in a real sense of *questioner*, the "socratic method" is surely not just a slick pedagogical technique. It is the recognition that a teacher may be able to help bring to maturity what already exists within the students: the potential for growth and change.

The mysterious teacher as ally for the questing student can serve one other vital purpose: he or she can be a source of comfort and an impeccable model in the terrible loneliness that inevitably accompanies the search. Loren Eiseley was once told by a native girl in Bimini: "Those as hunts treasure must go alone, at night, and when they find it they have to leave a little of their blood behind."[8] The treasures one brings from the depths are most often not well-received by the society at large. But impeccability of following what Don Juan calls a "path with heart" is what attracts students to take the risk to beat such a path as well.

In our society there are no lessons about psychological, spiritual, or even educational risk-taking. The "way to the back country"[9] is well hidden and POSTED. There are no trail markers, few guides. Many who trespass are prosecuted. The rest, who don't, have been placed in protective custody, too often within colleges and universities, safely insulated from the risks towards wholeness which are anathema to existing institutional power-holders.

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A second change, already implied in my suggestion to alter our perceptions of what a college teacher is, has to do with relationships with students and involves the question of access.

I teach at a public two-year college with an "open-door" admissions policy. Access is guaranteed. While the democratic character of such colleges is admirable, and the problems of basic literacy are rampant but soluble, the deeper question of having to demonstrate worthiness to study with a "master" is never touched. I have been suggesting so far that the problem is rooted in college teachers not seeing themselves in this light.

As I experience it, the lack of academic preparedness of college students is not really the most vital issue. The key issue is preparedness to share in the core of what makes us most human -- the capacity to learn and grow through that learning. The issue is, once again, that of the sacred and the profane. Learning belongs to the realm of the *numinous*. Teaching is not so much a career as it is an *archetype*: a controlling image or symbol which, when brought to awareness, is a vehicle for attaining wholeness. Perhaps, in the economically difficult time in which we live, just *having* students seems like enough. The depression mentality on college campuses is pervasive.

What is depressing for me, however, is that even if we could enforce minimum levels of *literacy** among our students, we do not question their level of *aspiration*. "Upward mobility" in this sense is not socio-economic, but psycho-spiritual. As a teacher I would like to be able to say, along with the mountain hermit Han Shan, that the way is treacherous. Right footing is a concommitant of right heart:

> Men ask the way to Cold Mountain
> Cold Mountain: there's no through trail.
> In summer, ice doesn't melt
> The rising sun blurs in swirling fog.
> How did I make it?
> My heart's not the same as yours.
> If your heart was like mine
> You'd get it and be right here.[10]

Every spiritual tradition has examples of aspirants going to nearly unimaginable lengths to be accepted for study with a known master (even if that tradition claims, at bottom, that there is nothing to learn). There is the often-told Zen story of a seeker who waited for years while being tested by Bodhidharma. Finally he cut off his hand and was accepted as a student. While the lesson might be that there is no problem to be solved, and mystery evaporates in the "discovery" of ordinary mind, it seems to me that one must *work toward* that understanding. Most contemporary educational institutions begin with the assumption (explicit or implicit) that gratification in the world of affairs is the highest goal. "Mystery" is then a function of gaining access to an intellectual or economic or social elite. Self-realization is most likely a consequence of *failure* in these attempts, i.e., wondering what went wrong.

In talking about searching out students who demonstrate their own level of aspiration, I am *not* proposing a new elitism. My concern is not with chosen people but quite the reverse -- *people who choose*. And I hope to make clear that all this is *not* to suggest a lack of generosity or openness or compassion on the part of the teacher. Again, quite the opposite. If the buddhist bodhisattva can be thought of as a model for even a college teacher, generosity becomes a kind of discipline, part of one's teaching practice. According to Chogyam Trungpa, Rinpoche, "generosity is particularly connected with the notion of sharing knowledge, or teaching. In fact, everybody who takes the bodhisattva vow is regarded as a potential teacher."[11]

The question of accessibility is one interesting aspect of some of the "new consciousness" movements which go to considerable lengths to seek out students. It seems to me that the new entrepreneurial purveyors of higher consciousness, in attempting to "create a new mythology," have shortcut the process dramatically. In an apparent disregard for the archetypal quest -- where one must take deadly risks seeking out a teacher and ultimate understanding after life-long commitment and struggle -- too many new consciousness groups promise pre-packaged slain dragons and a good "high" presided over by "facilitators" who have been to a few more workshop weekends than the rest of us. Sort of enlightenment on one's lunch hour or summer vacation, initiatory identity and communality through the more exotic advertising pages of the *Village Voice* or the *East West Journal*. In those instances where the human potentials movement offers overnight, questless transformation, it exists *not* as a counterforce but as a mirror for "post-technological" society.

While it often *seems* that there are no new horizons, no unexplored frontiers, there are as many have pointed out, the horizons of our own minds. But even here, the spiritual supermarket emerges as the new frontier for the newly ambitious. So, various "humanistic" entrepreneurs look to acquire a franchise. Despite what might be the purity and profundity of their teachings, when TM and *est* compete in the same market, an accommodation between them is not so much a spiritual embrace as it is oligopoly.

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I do not believe that teachings are "objective" and have no connection to context or the quality of mind with which they appeal and to which they appeal. I do not understand pandering meditation to bombadiers or the executives of Coca-Cola -- so they can engage in business as usual but in a more *relaxed* way -- as right action. As a practitioner of various spiritual, physical and intellectual disciplines, and as a teacher who aspires to a greater level of mastery, I am seeking to understand how what I know and who I am might be shared with others in what Trungpa calls an attitude of "dignity and delight." I don't know whether American colleges and universities are a context in which that attitude can be sustained.

I am suggesting that college teachers remystify their teachings and persons -- albeit in a light-hearted manner -- so that the quest for understanding, wisdom, and compassion is placed, however subversively, on college agendas. It need not be known to anyone but students who aspire to self-knowledge (or the knowledge of no-self) and who have the special eye and the special persistence to penetrate the light-hearted, but mysterious husk of the knowledgeable teacher.

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*Although, according to Paul Watzlawick, "Confusion sharpens our senses and our attention to detail" and can aid in "changing a person's view of reality." See Watzlawick, *How Real Is Real*, p. 29.

Theodore Roszak, a sensitive teacher and writer, talks about bureaucracy as the central mystifying aspect of higher education. Thus, in locating the potential of education most positively as the mutual search for identity among students and teachers, Roszak calls for the "demystification" of education institutions. Given our common sensibilities and common teachers, my dispute with Roszak, if indeed one exists, is more semantic than substantive.

See Theodore Roszak, Person/Planet: The Creative Disintegration of Industrial Society (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1978), especially chapter 7.

*I noticed that New York State is going to try to raise the minimum competency of high school students by requiring would-be graduates to pass an upgraded, standardized exam. While this appears to be a good, tough idea whose time is long overdue, a deeper look shows its wrong-headedness. The exam would obfuscate the custodial and credentializing function of schooling's first twelve years by presenting the illusion of overriding concern with competence.

[1] Loren Eiseley, "The Mind as Nature," in The Night Country (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), pp. 214-215.

[2] Alan Watts, Psychotherapy East and West (New York: Ballantine Books, 1961), p. 84.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Gary Snyder, "Poetry and the Primitive," in Earth House Hold (New York: New Directions, 1957), p. 17.

[6] Quoted by Eiseley, op. cit., p. 222.

[7] Mary Caroline Richards, Centering: In Pottery, Poetry, and the Person (Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 1961).

[8] Eiseley, op. cit., p. 224.

[9] Gary Snyder, "Journeys," (Section 14), Six Section's from Mountains and Rivers Without End (San Francisco: Four Seasons Foundation, 1970), p. 37.

[10] In Gary Snyder, Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems (San Francisco: Four Seasons Foundation 1969), p. 42.

[11] Chogyam Trungpa, "The Bodhisattva Vow," in Garada V, Transcending Hesitation (Boulder, Colorado: Shambhala Publications, 1977), p. 58.

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Dr. Katims is most interested in understanding the application of mindful spiritual practice to social structures so they will embody ecological and evolutionary necessity.

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